

*Aid to Britain Today, War Tomorrow* AN EDITORIAL

FIFTEEN CENTS

*December 3, 1940*

# NEW MASSES

## LABOR'S DECISION

*Bruce Minton covers the CIO*

*Barbara Giles reports the AFL*

*Silos into Powder Plants*

SIMON W. GERSON

*The Choice Before Us*

SAMUEL SILLEN

*The Battle for Chile*

FRANK T. BAKER

RUTH McKENNEY, GROPPER, JOHN STUART, PAUL MICHAELS

## Between Ourselves

WE ARE grateful to the friend who invited us for a four-day Thanksgiving trip through New England. The northward trip was uneventful until we reached Boston, where we skipped a heartbeat of pleasure to find NM on display in the center of the town, on Tremont street. We visited everything from Beacon Hill to the fish wharves, from fair Harvard to cloudy Charlestown. Our artist host paused to draw a frame building, shattered and shabby, windows cracked, walls rotted, shingles loose. He found other and more pleasant scenes to record along the Cape, homeward bound, where autumn is dying and the woodlands are graying. Even the hot dog stands at Plymouth Rock do not distract the eye from the wide expanse of waters over which the Pilgrims once came to start the whole thing.

Well, there were few highlights to this peaceful super-weekend. Upon our return to New York we found a deskful of letters. One, from the American Rescue Ship Mission, commanded our immediate attention, and should command yours. Three hundred thousand dollars is needed to bring the Spanish refugees from the horror camps of France to Latin America. Checks or money should be sent to Prof. Lyman R. Bradley, Suite 810, 200 Fifth Ave., New York City. Time is precious. Only funds are needed to liberate these heroic men, women, and children.

We hope Ruth McKenney will not be too fretful at our lifting a carbon-copy of a letter addressed to V. J. Jerome, NM contributor. Our wandering eyes read through it, and then we decided, willy-nilly, to publish it here. "Thank you very much for sending me an inscribed copy of your pamphlet, *Intellectuals and the War*, Ruth wrote. "I received it last night, and early this morning right after breakfast sat down to read it. It is terribly rich and exciting and packed with fruitful and useful ideas. Every few minutes as I read along, I felt like jumping up and saying to someone, 'But here's the perfect answer for so and so and so and so. . . .'

"More important than that, I believe it will make all of us who are intellectuals have a feeling of dignity and strength, and I know that it gave me a more solid feeling of my own place.

"I have been so filled with disgust at the behavior of the bourgeois intellectual that every now and then I have had terrible doubts about sitting down now, today, and starting a long book. I felt that perhaps I ought to give up the dubious

glories of being a 'writer,' and do something solid. I had such violent reaction to the behavior of these traitors in the writers' field that I felt somehow that maybe writing at all, in this historic moment, was a waste of time and a kind of betrayal too. So that when I read your pamphlet this morning I felt I had finally had a satisfying answer. The chapter on the intellectuals and the working class made me understand that writing a novel, even a bad one, was worth doing.

"I believe your pamphlet is one of the important theoretical contributions of the period. If I could only hold some of the dopey intellectuals I know face down and eyes down over its pages I feel I could bring them around. Anyway, I'm going to send it to a whole raft of people I know, some with the hope it will really pull them together for the fight approaching—and some just to make them ashamed of themselves; but I believe it is really a great weapon in our fight, and I think it is the sort of work that will really last."

Incidentally, Ruth McKenney wishes to acknowledge the many letters of praise for her recent column on Luiz Carlos Prestes. He is the Brazilian Communist whom Dictator Vargas has just sentenced to thirty more years in jail on top of the sixteen he has been serving. His case is arousing wide protest. Our readers are urged to continue their response to Ruth's appeal (see NM for November 19).

The big news this week is the annual ball, which is drawing ever nearer. Come to think of it, the Webster Hall affair, scheduled for Saturday night, December 7, is the social feature of NM's season. None of those horse-shows for us, but give us the traditional ball, where the writers, artists, and editors associated with NM through the years come back to renew old friendships.

Here's detailed news of the event: a revue is the entertainment feature. It will begin at 9:30 PM and will bring together the cream of talent from TAC, the American Youth Theater, and many groups which played the mountain greenery circuit at Unity, Chester's Zunbarg, Allaben Acres, and other camps. The revue program begins with *Mother India*, a satire on *Beau Geste*, *Gunga Din*, and other die-hard imperial bits of business; an opera skit, *Song of the Renegades*, *The Mooch of Time*, *We're the Independent Thinkers*, *The Liberal Strip Tease*, or *Intellectual Appeasement*, *Jingo Jitters*; and the grand finale, *Civilization as They Throw It*.

Prices for the ball are \$1 in advance, \$1.50 at the door, \$20 for boxes for ten—the latter for organizations whose members wish to enjoy the evening in maximum comfort and from a special vantage point. The date, we repeat, is December 7, the place Webster Hall. You may buy tickets at NM's office, 461 Fourth Avenue; the Workers Book Shop, 50 E. 13th Street, and Book-fair, 133 West 44th Street.

### Who's Who

FRANK T. BAKER has written on Latin-American affairs for numerous magazines. . . . Simon W. Gerson is on country-wide tour for NM. . . . Hy Kravif is on the staff of Labor Research Association. . . . John Stuart is co-author with Bruce Minton of *Men Who Lead Labor* and *The Fat Years and the Lean*. . . . Elizabeth Lawson's reviews have appeared frequently in NM. . . . Ed Falkowski has contributed to NM since it was a monthly. He is a former coal miner of Pennsylvania,

has worked in pre-Hitler Germany and the Soviet Union. . . . Charlotte Todes is the author of *Labor and Lumber*. . . . Lou Cooper is a musician and composer.

### Flashbacks

MEMO to Vito Marcantonio: On Dec. 2, 1914 Karl Liebknecht, sitting in the German Reichstag, shouted the only "No!" on the vote for the proposed war credits. . . . Memo to the Aid-to-Britain-Union-Now - England - Is-a-Democracy-in-Spite-of-India School of "Thought": Great Britain perforce acknowledged the independence of the United States on Nov. 30, 1782. . . . For those who are luxuriating in perplexity about the "enigmatic" Soviet peace policy we offer this clue: only a few days after taking power (Nov. 28, 1917, to be exact) the Soviet government appealed to all governments and warring nations to end the first great imperialist war. . . . John Brown was executed Dec. 2, 1859. . . . Friedrich Engels was born Nov. 28, 1820.

## This Week

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification sent to NEW MASSES rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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## The CIO Moves Ahead

Bruce Minton reports an historic convention. Lewis resigns, but his policies remain. FDR's fifth columnist, Sidney Hillman, is routed. Organize the unorganized is the watchword.

*Atlantic City.*

**A**MERICA can well take heart. The third convention of the Congress of Industrial Organizations resulted in a mighty victory for peace, a solemn promise to the working class—and a bitter, bitter defeat for the war-minded administration bent on smashing the labor movement under the slogan of “defense.” In the face of convention floor attacks and backstage intrigues, the delegates at Atlantic City last week mapped out a practical and effective program to organize the mass-production industries, to oppose with labor’s united strength any move toward war, to resist the reactionary drive against civil liberties and labor standards. This was victory, real victory.

The convention had been billed in the press as a struggle between John L. Lewis and Sidney Hillman. It was far more than that. But in one sense, these two men personified the momentous issues before the delegates. To uphold Lewis meant to reject the plea that organized labor be “good,” as it had been in a similar period twenty-three years before when Samuel Gompers was alive. Down in New Orleans, the disciples of Gompers were pledging themselves to keep their unions in line. To Atlantic City, Sidney Hillman came as an emissary from the White House, bearing the glad tidings that labor must mobilize, that the CIO and AFL should keep step in the march of imperialism. But Lewis gave the answer: “We shall smite them hip and thigh.” Smite them he did. And the CIO maintained and strengthened its independent role at a time when any other course would have been capitulation to war.

From start to finish, it was Lewis’ convention. And being Lewis’, the convention accomplished the main purpose of preserving the CIO. From the moment the meeting was first called to order, the Hillman forces were formally routed.

### DEMONSTRATION FOR LEWIS

As John L. Lewis rose to open the meeting, he was greeted with a demonstration demanding that he retain the presidency of the CIO. The mine workers led off, joined by the aggressive unions that, in the face of administration attack, were determined to continue organizing the unorganized and to safeguard the past gains of labor. The band marched through the hall, the delegates filed cheering and chanting past that remarkable man who stood with tears in his eyes in the center of the stage. Those who had come to

Atlantic City undetermined where to throw their support began to join the march. Their leaders looked on, at first with alarm, and then with a dawning realization that their flirtation with the anti-Lewis faction was full of risk. With a shocked expression, R. J. Thomas of the United Automobile Workers watched his union parade, visibly lamenting to himself how hard it always was to know which way to jump. Sherman Dalrymple of the United Rubber Workers gazed out blankly at the banners, sucking his pipe, wondering if Sidney Hillman would get the same response. Only the machine delegates of the machine-terrorized Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and the Hillman-controlled representatives of textile and shipyard workers, sat defiantly throughout the forty-two minute outburst of enthusiasm and affection for John L. Lewis.

The parade swirled by the president who had given his word to resign if Wendell Willkie lost the election. A month before, Lewis had excoriated President Roosevelt and had supported Wendell Willkie in the election campaign. Behind this commitment, however ill-advised, was Lewis’ correct evaluation of the Roosevelt administration’s desire to smash the labor movement as a necessary preliminary to taking this country into the war. Clearly, Lewis had few illusions regarding the advantages that would accrue to labor from a Willkie victory. He expected, however, that such an outcome would delay the drive toward war and momentarily weaken the attacks on labor. In the brief breathing spell, he saw a chance for the CIO to consolidate itself against attack, to gain valuable organizational time. To some degree, the tactic had advantages. But these advantages were far outweighed by the unfortunate wording of Lewis’ campaign speech. Workers were shocked; the majority voted for Roosevelt, albeit with apprehension; a large section criticized Lewis for failing to point out that labor should logically withhold support from either candidate, since no distinction could be made between them.

Yet with Willkie’s defeat, the endorsement by Lewis became an academic matter. What still remained valid in his speech was the attack on the course taken by President Roosevelt. At Atlantic City, as the delegates cheered and threw confetti and chanted “We Want Lewis!” they expressed their determination not to allow the now dead debate on the election to split the CIO. Sidney Hillman desired otherwise. In the mantle of “labor spokesman” for the administration, he had the task

of maneuvering the convention into repudiating Lewis—and thereby repudiating labor’s independence and militancy.

His lieutenants, however, found that the best they could do from the first moment of the “draft” Lewis demonstration was to “introduce bickering and controversy and cavil.” Only behind the closed doors of committee rooms did intrigue and trickery have effect. Only there did Social Democracy and administration bludgeoning and pressure from the Catholic hierarchy win compromises.

The demonstration quieted, and deep-voiced John L. Lewis in Biblical rhetoric reiterated his intention to resign. The mine workers when asked by the press if after all Lewis would reconsider his decision, replied that the question was an insult: Lewis, they pointed out, was a miner, and a miner’s word was unimpeachable. But resignation from CIO office did not mean abandonment of the fight to build and strengthen labor. “There are 52,000,000 people in this country who do not have enough to eat . . .” Lewis reminded the delegates. “Well, what are you going to do about it. . . ? I associate myself with the 52,000,000 shrunken bellies in this country; and I am for them regardless of any consideration, regardless of their creed or their color, their previous condition of servitude, or anything else.”

### LEWIS TOOK OFFENSIVE

The convention unfolded like a finely wrought play. It differed from most conventions where the plot is well-known in advance, and the denouement is a foregone conclusion. It is therefore worth describing the proceedings as they occurred. Lewis had spoken. He had taken the offensive with dramatic forcefulness, carrying the fight to his detractors, to those who criticized the better to destroy.

He was followed by Philip Murray, vice-president of the CIO, head of the organizational drive in steel, long Lewis’ close associate in the miners’ union, the logical candidate to succeed Lewis. He spoke on the need for greater participation in defense: his words were not as militant as some had hoped. He ended with a denial that he desired the presidency of the CIO. But he did not close the door. And as yet, the main issue of the convention was still to be fought—the issue of where the CIO would align itself, with Lewis or with Hillman, who wished to make the CIO into a national company union at the disposal of the administration.

The first day ended. On the second, the militants again refused to wait for the attack to come to them. The adoption of Lewis' long report on the achievements of the CIO during the past year and the outlook for the coming period was also a statement of principle for the future, a defiance of those who would clip labor's wings. As a premise, the report stated that the basic principle of social progress was the understanding that "labor's gains are won and defended only by labor's own organized strength." It condemned the war economy foisted on America which was "tending politically to foreign adventures," and called upon labor "to defend our liberties and democratic institutions, to protect existing social legislation, and to go forward with a far-reaching program for a happier and more prosperous America!" That could be achieved only by organizing the unorganized.

During the reading of this report, the Hillman spokesmen from the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and from textile began their counter-offensive. They Red-baited, and were slapped down in their criticism of Len de Caux, editor of the *CIO News*. Lewis had anticipated Red-baiting. To those who accused him of being influenced by Communism, he had roared in his opening address, "They lie in their beards, and they lie in their bowels." Now again he lashed out. The critics subsided quickly, only to return with a sally on another front. Why, they wanted to know, as the leonine Lewis paced up and down the platform, was there no promise for unity negotiations with the AFL, why no pledge to bring harmony to the labor movement? James Matles of the electrical workers answered, followed by Michael Quill of the transport workers. In thick Irish brogue, Quill remarked, "Three or four weeks ago the newspapers of this country were leading the people to believe that this discussion on labor unity would be a greater show than either the opening or closing of the Burma Road. . . . They want unity that would bust us wide open. . . ." And he pointed out that the question was not simply unity, but unity for what? The suggestion from the floor, he insisted, was designed to destroy the CIO. It differed not at all from the terms on which the AFL desired unity—by doing away with industrial organization. He sat down to an ovation.

Again Lewis joined the battle. He had been asked to explore the minds of the AFL. "Explore the mind of Bill Green?" he asked amid howls of laughter. "Why, Bill and I had offices next door to each other in the same corridor for ten years. I was a member of the same executive council. . . . I have done a lot of exploring of Bill's mind, and I give you my word there is nothing there."

"As an academic proposition," he continued, "I agree that peace is fine." He glanced down at those who had raised the question. "Above all the clamor comes the piercing wail and the laments of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. And they say, 'Peace, it is wonderful,' and there is no peace. There is no peace because you are not yet strong enough to com-

mand peace upon honorable terms." But what did their noisy lamentation mean? Did their cry denote fear of the fight, as David Dubinsky of the Ladies Garment Workers Union had become afraid and was now crying out "like Rachel in the wilderness, against the racketeers and the panderers and the crooks" who dominated the AFL? "I am not weary of the fight," said Lewis. The battle must go on for "the things for which this movement was formed and dedicated . . . to organize the unorganized." When that was accomplished, "you will hasten the day, the happy day, when American labor can once more be unified."

The convention jumped to its feet and applauded wildly—except the ten from the Amalgamated and their few friends from the textile and shipyard unions. Lewis had scored heavily. Once again he had stormed the Hillman camp, smiting his adversaries without mercy, plunging them into retreat. The second day ended, with the report adopted unanimously. The militants were elated.

#### HILLMAN FORCES SCATTERED

Until then, Sidney Hillman had shunned the convention. He had left Atlantic City the night before the convention opened with the remark that he would not return. But his forces had been scattered, his position ridiculed. On Wednesday morning, Sidney Hillman appeared in Atlantic City. He talked long and earnestly. He grovelled and he rationalized and he asked only that labor have patience, and more patience, and still more patience while he failed them in high places. The convention sat silent. He Red-baited, calling his critics "Communists," warning of "foreign philosophies." The Amalgamated cheered. Again Hillman, in a nervous gesticulating plea, asked for patience from the labor movement, and with great care smiled down at the delegates. The convention applauded politely.

"That was the most pathetic stinking speech I've ever heard!" commented an old-time mine delegate, conservative and cautious in his outlook. The majority of delegates agreed. The Amalgamated supporters declared they had been thrilled by a chance to hear the words of a great labor statesman. But around the hall, to snickers, went the limerick:

Mr. Hillman is suffering pain,  
From athlete's foot on the brain,  
It's a disease you will meet,  
From kissing the feet,  
Of the President, time and again.

The debate on resolutions—the program of the CIO in action—proceeded. Simultaneously, Hillman retired behind closed doors. He spoke for the government in the soft, appeasing words of Social Democracy. To help him, the mighty of the Catholic Church slipped quietly into the convention, sent by the bishops, speaking the words of sanctity. The Church and the administration and the Social Democrats argued for concessions, and won a partial victory—though they were turned back in their main desire to ban Communists from holding CIO office. The following day, the so-called

"ism" resolution came to the floor of the convention. It was a bad resolution, not only in what it said, but in its purpose to confuse, to open the floor to splitting debates. It would serve as an excuse to attack Lewis for his policy of judging organizers not by political affiliation but by the work they accomplished. The Amalgamated licked its chops and waited for the kill. But the majority prevailed, forcing Thomas Kennedy, who had bowed to the Church as chairman in committee, to rise and ask that the resolution be passed without splitting debate. The convention so ordered.

The inclusion of the resolution in the CIO records was undoubtedly a defeat for the progressives. Its elaborate denunciation of Communism, which was lumped together with fascism, is indefensible, as most of the delegates were aware. The issue was never whether the CIO should endorse Communism. But the party of the working class has given loyal and unstinted support to the building of the labor movement in this country, and the gratuitous condemnation of Communism which was not the issue in the first place, and furthermore the comfort offered the Red-baiters only encouraged those like Sidney Hillman who would reduce the CIO to impotence. The task of the unions was made more difficult by this resolution which the disrupters and employers and administration agents hope to use in the future to impede labor's program. Yet the answer to these enemies is contained in the words of the resolution itself:

The Congress of Industrial Organizations must organize the unorganized and build up and strengthen their unions. . . . There is room for all of us in this great movement to work for these noble ideals and sound objectives. We highly recommend that the Congress of Industrial Organizations continue to carry on in the spirit of real American trade unionism to secure economic justice and social security, and to make of this country a better place in which to work and in which to live.

The threat to unity within the CIO which Hillman had engineered through the passage of the "ism" resolution was grave but by no means final. To offset it, the convention outlined a program for the health, peace, and security of the American people. The passage of the anti-war resolution, with its warning against "efforts to drag this country into war," in its insistence that "this nation must not enter into any foreign entanglements which may in any way drag us down the path of entering or becoming involved in foreign wars," sharply repudiated the plans of Roosevelt and Hillman. The convention refused to countenance a proposal endorsing aid to Britain. In the criticism of the draft administration, in the headlong condemnation of defense contract awards to corporations violating the National Labor Relations Act or any other law of the land, Hillman's plea for "patience" received a stern and contemptuous answer. Again John L. Lewis took issue with Hillman's sickly excuses that "he was doing the best he could." There was no justification for the granting of contracts to law violators,

# C.I.O. CONVENTION

ATLANTIC CITY

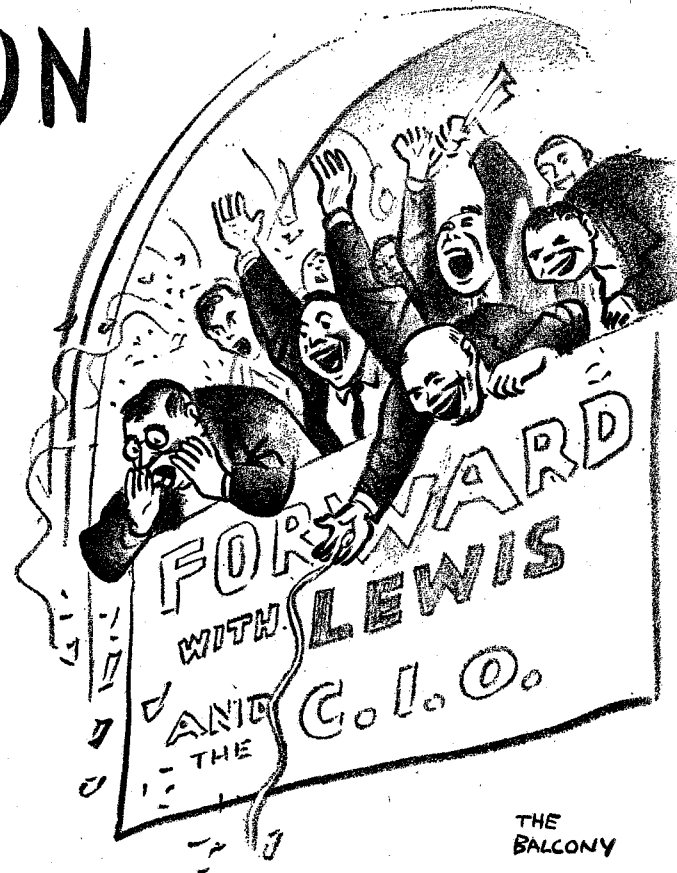
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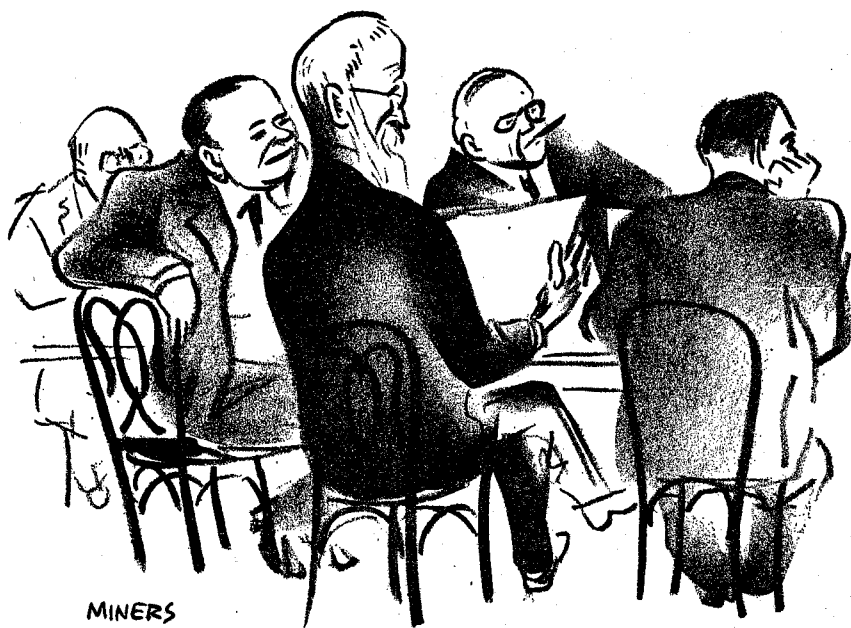
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JOHN L. LEWIS



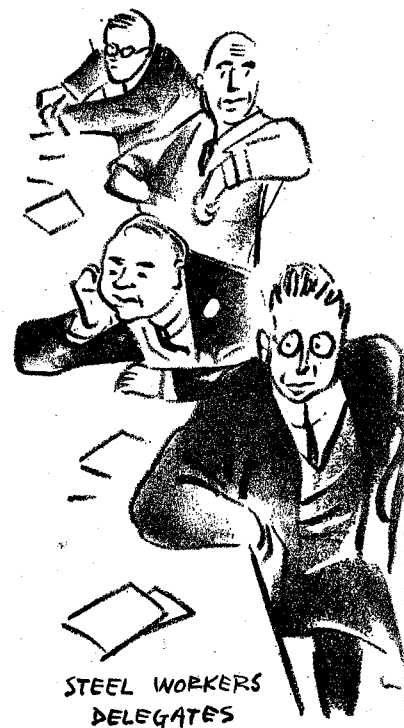
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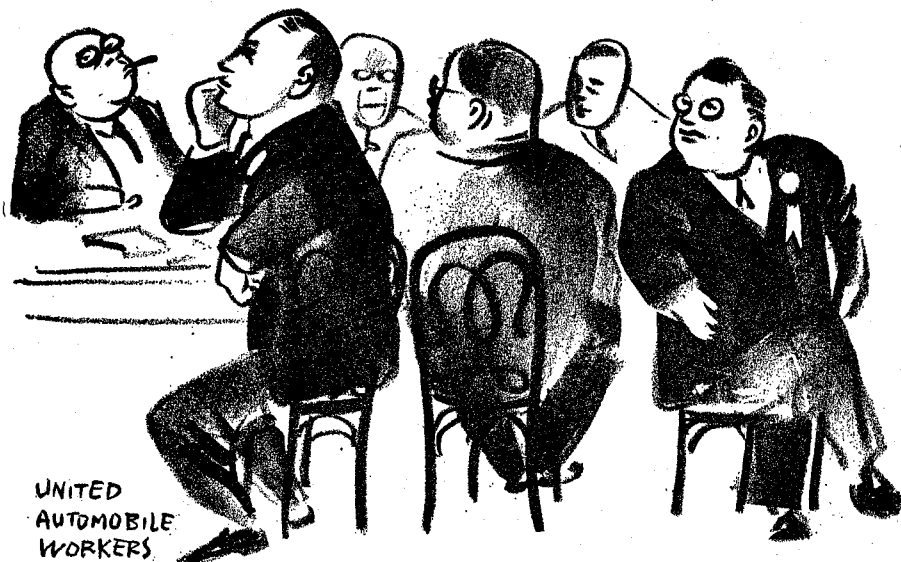
MINERS  
DELEGATION



PHILIP MURRAY



STEEL WORKERS  
DELEGATES



UNITED  
AUTOMOBILE  
WORKERS



NATIONAL MARITIME UNION DELEGATES

retorted Lewis. The responsibility rested squarely with Franklin D. Roosevelt who could issue an executive order forbidding the awards. "So why in the name of equity and good conscience cannot labor induce the President of the United States, the protector of the people, to say that this law should be enforced not alone against the weak and the lowly but against the rich and the powerful and the opulent . . . ? I call upon this champion of human rights who sits in the White House to be guided by the logic of the situation and by his oath to uphold the law of this government and the Constitution of the United States and give to labor this relief for which it pays."

Small comfort for those who clamor for war, small praise for Sidney Hillman. The offensive continued: "The CIO hereby dedicates itself to a full participation in the political life of this country uniting its strength and resources with all other liberal and progressive forces . . . looking toward the formulation which would guarantee and assure an independent political role for organized labor." The administration was blamed for the failure to do away with the poll tax disfranchising millions of white and black voters in the South; for its refusal to pass an anti-lynch bill; for its desertion of the unemployed and the 52,000,000 "ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed"; for its use of the anti-trust laws against labor; for its illegal persecution of Harry Bridges, leader of the West Coast longshoremen. It demanded a new program to replace WPA, to provide at least 3,000,000 jobs; it called for adequate provision for the youth, the aged, and all others who were in need of security and education. It urged strong safeguards for the civil liberties of Negroes and foreign-born, of the working class and all the people. It asked for great benefits for the farmers, for more housing, for the protection of social legislation and rigorous enforcement of the labor relations, wages and hours, and Walsh-Healey acts. The CIO in convention enunciated a powerful, realistic program for the benefit of the working class and for the greater happiness of the people of this nation.

The fourth day closed, as a ripple of laughter crossed the hall at the news of poor David Dubinsky's beating in the lobby of a New Orleans hotel. "The rape of Rachel in the wilderness," said a member of the National Maritime Union. On the fifth and final day, John L. Lewis rose to nominate his friend and successor, Philip Murray. In an unopposed election, the new president took over leadership. In philosophy, Murray had not kept pace with his close associate. He has been influenced in the past by the Red scare. But to those who heard him accept the CIO presidency and pledge himself solemnly to uphold the program adopted by the convention, his expressed determination to bring "organization of men and women into mighty unions such as you and I represent" was a note of promise. They cheered him when he warned, in his Scotch burr that warranted the bagpipes which entered the hall as he

was nominated, "I am not going to be content with a pledge of loyalty and support. . . . Deeds count! Hard work is needed! Petty bickering must stop! The tongue of the slandermonger must be stilled! The work of the organization must be . . . when this convention is over, to go back and organize men and women into those unions. And do a good job."

John L. Lewis stepped out. Philip Murray took his place. Joseph Curran, militant president of the National Maritime Union, was elected vice-president to fill the gap left by Murray. Frank Rosenblum of the Amalgamated was named to the office left open by Hillman's resignation. A new executive council, composed of a representative of every international and national union was inducted. The course of the CIO had been plotted for the coming year. It must now be carried into action.

A word should also be said of the presence of young leaders, representing millions of organized workers, who are taking their place in the ranks of labor. Reid Robinson of the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, progressive, able, forthright, had the courage to appear at the Emergency Peace Mobilization conference held in Chicago last Labor Day. James Matles of the electrical, radio, and machine workers, Harry Bridges speaking for West Coast longshoremen and warehousemen, Abram Flaxer of the government employees' union, Donald Henderson of the cannery and agricultural workers, Donal Sullivan and Milton Kaufman of the Newspaper Guild, and scores of others are active in the organizational drive of labor. Lamentably, neither the automobile nor the rubber unions showed leadership at the convention alert to the responsibilities that must be met in the coming year. R. J. Thomas of the United Automobile

Workers, who recently spent most of his time campaigning for Roosevelt, has worried more about playing union power politics than in spurring the drive to organize Ford. He does not reflect the desires of the UAW membership, nor does his fellow officer, Walter Reuther, reflect the sentiment of the auto workers when he devotes himself to Red-baiting and to criticizing Lewis. Sherman Dalrymple of the United Rubber Workers has settled back comfortably into union office at a time when advances should be registered. His colleague, Thomas Burns, is the eager friend of the FBI and particularly chummy with the rubber barons. But these few inadequate figures, along with the corrupt Amalgamated machine, were an exception in Atlantic City. Most of the delegates were true organizers of the working class, intent on bringing the benefit of unionism to the millions in America's mass-production industries.

And so the CIO ended its difficult and decisive meeting. John L. Lewis is no longer president. But he is still the greatest personality of the CIO, and he is still the powerful leader of the miners' union, richest and strongest organization of American labor. His deep voice will continue to ring in the councils of the CIO. He is still head of Labor's Non-Partisan League, the political arm of labor when it fulfills the promise of the resolution passed by the delegates.

John L. Lewis won the battle of Atlantic City. Sidney Hillman went away with little. The struggle for the independence or the shackling of the labor movement will go on. The stake is America's peace and security. At Atlantic City, the specter of the Gompersism that Hillman thought would haunt the convention was turned away. To President Murray, pledged to carry forward the aggressive and ambitious program of the CIO, the labor movement gave its full support. The victory at Atlantic City is a great promise and a great responsibility. **BRUCE MINTON.**



## V. F. Calverton

**T**HE ignoble career of V. F. Calverton conformed to the pattern of literary renegacy analyzed by Mike Gold in his penetrating series of articles now running in the *Daily Worker*. Whatever measure of influence Calverton once exercised was due to his pretense of being a Marxist critic. The hollowness of that pretense was ironically exposed by an editorial in the *New York Times* on Calverton's death last week. The most vicious enemies of the working class embraced this "Marxist" up to the very end.

The past seven years have confirmed the exhaustive analysis of Calverton which appeared in *NEW MASSES* for January 1933. His "glib and arbitrary generalizations," his mechanical sociology, his flirtations with Trotskyism, Lovestoneism, and other anti-working class movements, increasingly revealed the instability and untrustworthiness of his work. At the end he was more than ever isolated from the mass movements of his time.

# Billy Green's Convention

The AFL hierarchy and Mr. Roosevelt's representatives toss the ball back and forth and call it a convention. Sir Bill and Sir Walter ride off to the wars. Barbara Giles' vignette of New Orleans.

New Orleans.

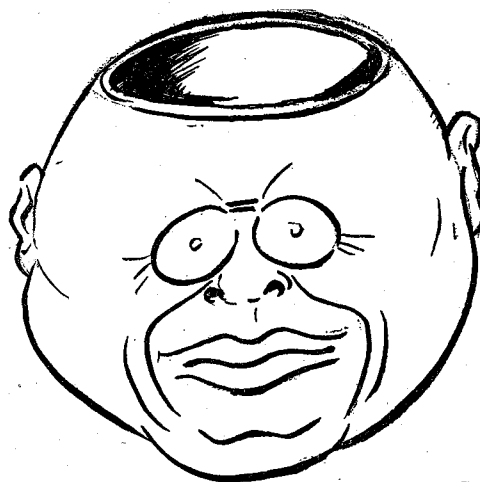
THE AFL hierarchs are not exactly marching as to war. They are just going along with Franklin D. Roosevelt, in Mr. Roosevelt's pocket. It's a cozy place for William Green and, what's more, he's proud of it. So are practically the entire AFL executive council and a substantial majority of the nearly 600 delegates, a large percentage of whom are not "delegates" at all in the true sense of the word, but appointees of the international presidents. They are well dressed, with the general look of smalltown prosperous business men. Between them and the four-million membership of the Federation lies an incalculable gulf of interests and aims.

At this writing, the convention still has a week to go. At the end of the first week, with the exception of one or two incidents, there has scarcely been a whisper from the floor. Mr. Green and his lieutenants on the one hand, and the administration's representatives on the other, stand on the platform and toss the ball back and forth in a game called "War through Peace." The peace they urge is a peace of death: "harmony and tranquillity," to quote Mr. Green; "uninterrupted work in the defense industries . . . sacrifice . . . self-discipline," to quote Mr. Roosevelt, who sent a message.

Delegates sit uncomfortably still on the hard chairs. Mr. Green suggests that a motion be made; someone rises to say, "I so move," and sits down quickly, blushing with self-consciousness. About 70 percent of them applaud all references to President Roosevelt, cracks at John L. Lewis, and mention of the British Labor Tories' "splendid leadership" in a war government. The other 30 percent look slightly bored. One man mutters, "I wish I were in Atlantic City." During recess those delegates who might have—and in many cases actually have—stepped straight out of William Z. Foster's *Misleaders of Labor*, celebrate their reunion with old cronies, the perennial, hand-picked delegates for the past several years.

## NO CONVENTION VOTE

Proceedings so far are a pretty sample of the "democracy" for which Green and his Washington bosses ask workers to die. No convention vote, even, was taken on the executive council's reply to Roosevelt's message. It was simply read from the platform—a reply written by seventeen men and signed by Green, coolly pledging "the full support of the membership" to the President's war program! Secretary of War Stimson, calling for "total defense," warned that under the "terrific effort" of preparedness labor cannot expect "business as usual," and Mr. Green assured him of "the loyal, patriotic, unreserved support and cooperation of the officers and members."



*"I have done a lot of exploring in Bill's mind," said John L. Lewis, "and I give you my word there is nothing there."*

Nor does the AFL chief's arrogance stop at AFL affairs. As a first condition for peace negotiations with the CIO he will accept nothing less than John L. Lewis' resignation from the presidency of the United Mine Workers. When a reporter asked him how he would react if the CIO proposed that AFL officials resign in order to promote unity, Green retorted huffily that that would be a different case: "We have made our declaration of peace; Lewis has not." On at least one occasion Mr. Green has even presumed to speak for the whole United States—when he responded to the military outpourings of fraternal delegate Edward A. Jamieson of the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress. "I now declare," said Green, "that I know it is our purpose that if . . . the dictator, the autocrat, the despot, the savage shall attempt to set his foot on Canadian soil the United States will respond and will join with Canada in resisting any attempt to invade this continent."

Green speaks for the reactionary leadership and he expresses them accurately. He does not, of course, express rank and file sentiment. He and his friends may like to be carried around in FDR's pocket. They may even persuade themselves that the President is really in their pockets. They can derive plenty of assurance from the administration's approval of them as opposed to bad-boy Lewis, their favored position as men who can be trusted to promote "sound employer-worker relations" in wartime. They can beam when Dan Tracy, assistant Secretary of Labor, calls for "mechanic corporals, sergeants, colonels, generals" and then cries, "Thank God you have preserved the spirit of the true craftsmen!" and Green can answer that "at long last the AFL feels it has a fine entree with the Department of Labor."

Yet the voice of the rank and file sometimes

echoes indirectly in even the most hardboiled addresses. Speakers have had to smear the tough black bread of "sacrifice" with buttery promises to protect collective bargaining and social gains. Harvey Brown, president of the International Association of Machinists, emphasized in a public interview the need for a thirty-hour week; his union membership constitutes one of the largest AFL groups working in war industries. Numerous resolutions have been offered for the maintenance of wage-hour standards, better housing, extension of social security, and against the violation of labor legislation by firms that get government contracts. The executive council report bitterly attacked Thurman Arnold's union-busting campaign and the breakdown of the Wage-Hour Administration. It supported abolition of the poll tax and passage of the Anti-Lynching Bill. Even from the platform a progressive note or two has sounded. Charles Wills, chairman of the federation's Labor Press Committee, wanted to know when labor had ever done anything *but* sacrifice. "Yes," he said, "we will sacrifice again—but we want to make good and sure what those sacrifices are going to be." And on racketeering: "When racketeering rules the world how in the name of God can you keep it out of the labor movement?"

## BRITISH "DEMOCRACY"

Drain off the demagoguery and there still remains in these concessions to honest trade-unionism an awareness that the AFL membership has needs and demands that differ from those of the top men. Another indication of this may be the surprisingly small amount of Red-baiting. What there is has mostly been confined to implying or stating outright that Communism and Nazism are identical—which weird piece of distortion reached its peak in the executive council report that the USSR had collaborated with Nazi Germany in the Spanish war!

Of course the boys are all for "democracy" and against "totalitarian revolution." Specifically, they're for British "democracy," with Green and his chums playing Bevin, Morrison, et al. Sir Walter Citrine, general secretary of the British Trades Union Congress, is the toast and pet of the convention. Green threw his arms around him when he arrived, chortling, "Well, you old rascal, I am glad to see you!" Shortly after Sir Walter arrived he held a press conference which had some curious aspects of candor or brazenness, as you prefer. This knight of labor "does not think it advisable" for the British trade unions to ask the government its war objectives "at this time." It "might create difficulties in the event of changing circumstances in the nature of the conflict." The unions, he said, "favor"

dominion status for India but are not doing anything immediate about it; they wouldn't like to "eliminate India from the British commonwealth of nations."

But one very nice thing has happened in England: the war has obliterated class lines—which should be news to the wretched huddlers in bomb-shelters so inadequate and unsanitary that the government was forced to listen when the people, led by the Communist Party, demanded some of the safety assured London's wealthy. Sir Walter doesn't like Communists.

#### JIM CROW

One of the two resolutions calling for aid to Britain is sponsored by the Socialist, A. Philip Randolph, and by Milton Webster, both of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, who are receiving an ugly taste of "democratic civilization" as it affects their own race. It was Randolph who angrily insisted on the Negroes returning to the local AFL central body a check for the entertainment of the twenty Negro delegates separately from the whites. In the civilization of this town Jim Crow stares at you everywhere—in street cars, restaurants, parks, hotels, theaters. There's no poll tax but all except a few of the Negroes are prevented from voting. It might interest Mr. Randolph, however, to know that 90 percent of those Negroes, polled by the Southern Negro Youth Congress, have declared themselves for the Marcantonio bill to repeal the Conscription Act.

"America's Most Interesting City," in fact, offers a number of interesting studies in democracy. The police force, which has smashed more than one strike, includes a number of gangsters who were taken on the force for reform purposes. Sir Walter Citrine remarked pathetically on his arrival here that he had instinctively ducked when he heard the police sirens, mistaking them for air-raid alarms. Perhaps the knight errant has found out by now that when police sirens blow in New Orleans a large part of organized labor ducks. CIO organizers have been beaten up in jails simply because they were CIO organizers. The AFL is better treated, since employers prefer it to the "Jew-run" Lewis organization.

In the CIO teamsters' strike of 1938, strike leaders were arrested and then visited in jail by local labor statesmen (under police escort) and badgered in an attempt to make them sign AFL membership cards. Strikebreakers, in the form of "swamp rats" from the outlying bayou country, were brought in. The CIO men won the strike and carried the NLRB election four to one. There are now fourteen CIO locals in New Orleans. The AFL membership is large—5,000 in the International Longshoremen's Association alone, which is stirring with potential rebellion against its racketeering officers.

The French Quarter's carefully preserved decay is modern and luxurious by comparison with the Negro and poor white districts. Shabby frame shacks line streets as unlighted and unpaved as in the days of the Spanish

rule of Louisiana, some of them only a few blocks from beautiful St. Charles Avenue with its ante-bellum homes and generous lawns. Prices are as high as in New York, wages about one-third as high. A pack of cigarettes costs 20 cents and 4 mills—just one example of the sales tax that New Orleans citizens pay on everything they buy.

But the picture is not all negative. Organizations like the Negro Youth Congress and the growing labor unions have had a definite effect, particularly on the Negroes. It's possible to see, even in the most casual encounter, a certain dignity and self-respect which would have stamped a man as a "bad nigger" a few years ago. Domestic workers still get only \$3 to \$7 a week, but they are not so willing as they once were to perform large favors for the sake of some leftover food or an outworn dress. The old Southern ruling class complacency about a Negro's ability to "live on a nickel's worth of grits a day and love it" is being shaken.

#### DUBINSKY PROVIDES COPY

This is the sort of facts that you won't find in the local press, which is having a hard time making news out of this convention. Besides Citrine they have had to rely mostly on David Dubinsky, who is very obliging about providing copy. Mr. Dubinsky, who took his International Ladies' Garment Workers Union out of the CIO and returned it to the AFL on the "proviso" that Green would clean out the racketeers, had a fist fight on Thanksgiving morning at one o'clock in the Hotel Roosevelt lobby with unsavory Joseph Fay, vice-president of the International Union of Operating Engineers.

Dubinsky is also sounding off vigorously about his rather belated discovery that Green and the executive council do not intend to fulfill the anti-racketeering proviso. It seems that interfering with the "autonomy" of unions by ousting their thieves is the one thing that evokes Mr. Green's delicacy and his respect for union rights. How much of a scrap crusading David will make for his anti-racketeering resolution is uncertain, but one thing is clear: he won't take the ILGWU out of the AFL no matter how the anti-racketeering issue is treated.

Another matter unsettled at this date is labor unity. The AFL leadership is for it—on its own terms, which include, besides the resignation of Lewis as UMWA president, a splitting of basic CIO unions into craft unions. Right now the boys feel that they can get such a "peace." A resolution was offered on the floor of the convention to prevent unions affiliated with the AFL from accepting communications from unaffiliated groups. John J. Kearney, president of the Boston Trades and Labor Council, challenged it on the ground that it would bar peace negotiations with the CIO, but the convention voted him down.

One prediction I will make with assurance—that before this convention is over William Green will be trying to speak with a Groton-on-Oxford accent. The attempt will be a small price to pay for the warm lining of a presidential pocket. What price he will require AFL members to pay is something else. So, most emphatically, is the question whether the members will want to pay anything at all for Mr. Green's ambitions.

BARBARA GILES.

## How Much Did You Get?

"SACRIFICES may be necessary in the future for everyone," said President Roosevelt in his message to the AFL convention. Just how the big corporations of the country are "sacrificing" is evident from figures of profits published in the November issue of the CIO *Economic Outlook*. These figures actually understate the extent of profiteering; as the *Outlook* points out, most of the corporations have made a larger provision for the payment of taxes than is warranted by the increased taxation measures. We publish below a few of those whose "sacrifices" proved most lucrative.

| Corporation                   | 1st nine months 1939 | 1st nine months 1940 | Increase |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| General Electric .....        | \$25,022,631         | \$37,094,776         | 48%      |
| Westinghouse Electric .....   | 9,069,810            | 14,583,327           | 61%      |
| Libby-Owens-Ford .....        | 3,900,516            | 7,314,781            | 87%      |
| Youngstown Sheet & Tube ..... | 1,311,259            | 5,265,492            | 300%     |
| Bethlehem Steel .....         | 11,609,456           | 34,160,745           | 202%     |
| Jones & Laughlin .....        | 281,189              | 6,232,903            | 2130%    |
| Allegheny-Ludlum Steel .....  | 682,094              | 3,193,837            | 417%     |
| United States Steel .....     | 12,390,756           | 69,418,070           | 460%     |
| Texas Corp. ....              | 17,500,000           | 33,692,712           | 92%      |
| Shell Union Oil .....         | 6,710,658            | 12,615,196           | 88%      |
| Atlantic Refining .....       | 3,130,000            | 6,562,000            | 110%     |
| Union Carbide & Carbon .....  | 19,151,730           | 30,976,728           | 60%      |
| Continental Motors .....      | 144,809              | 389,138              | 170%     |
| Glenn Martin Aircraft .....   | 1,513,778            | 4,798,981            | 217%     |
| Douglas Aircraft .....        | 2,382,159            | 7,288,335            | 206%     |
| Remington Rand .....          | 352,163              | 1,065,209            | 202%     |

# The Battle for Chile

The imperialists reach out to throttle one of the great democratic nations in Latin America. How the Popular Front is reacting. Foreign agents and the State Department.

CHILE holds a key position in the three-cornered struggle of American, British, and German imperialism for the control of Latin America. Chile is a source of essential war materials, especially nitrates and copper. It is politically the most advanced country in South America, with a Popular Front government and a powerful Communist Party. So long as its Popular Front holds together, Chile is a "dangerous" example to the rest of Latin America—a country in which the imperialists cannot gain their ends through intrigues with ruling cliques, a nation in which the people can make their voices heard.

For months United States papers have been publishing stories that predict an imminent collapse of the Chilean Popular Front and outlawing of the Chilean Communist Party. It is obvious that the present situation puts a terrible strain upon this semi-colonial state, with its markets and economic life crippled by the war, with foreign agents intriguing for the rival powers, its government sabotaged by native and foreign industrialists and landowners. To preserve its peace and democracy Chile needs a united people, with leaders of skill and integrity. The Chilean Popular Front faces difficult times. American progressives need to know more of this struggle, parallel and complementary to their own.

Chile is an enormously wealthy country. Imagine a strip of land about one hundred miles wide, stretching along the Pacific from southern Alaska to southern Mexico; turn this strip around and transplant it on the southern continent in the same latitudes, and you have Chile. It is a land of deserts in the torrid North, but deserts rich in nitrates, indispensable in the munitions industry and as fertilizer. It is rich in copper: Chile is the world's second copper producer, after the United States. There are 1,000,000,000 tons of iron ore in the Chilean soil, 2,000,000,000 tons of coal, as well as gold, sulphur, borax. The streams from the high Andes are rushing reserves of power. Greatest of all wealth for the people of Chile is its land. Almost anything can be grown in the central zone, while the colder South is suitable for pasture, rich in timber and fur-bearing animals.

## THE OWNERS

Here, then, is a land where 5,000,000 Chileans should be able to live in peace and prosperity. But the nitrates and copper belong to Guggenheim's Anaconda; the iron to Bethlehem; the shipping to Grace Lines; the utilities to Electric Bond & Share and I.T.&T.; mortgages on the national credit to National City, Guaranty Trust, and the British Banco de Edwards. And the land—whatever part is not in these great industrial domains—is

still held by the native oligarchy of the *Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura*. Out of 60,000,000 acres suitable for agriculture 36,000,000 are owned by fewer than 700 landlords, while another 9,000,000 are owned by perhaps 2,500 additional *hacendados*; this disposes of 75 percent of the acreage, leaving mighty little to small farmers or for colonization.

Of every hundred working class Chileans fifty-three work in agriculture, thirty-one in mining or industry, and sixteen in commerce. Yet agriculture is the least important of Chile's occupations from the point of view of her exploiters; she is the seventh wine producer of the world, some mutton and hides are exported, but most of the land, four-fifths of it, is left idle. Two-thirds of the agricultural workers are sharecroppers, each holding a small strip, but mostly working with their entire families on the lord's domain. Their pay for this work, plus a share of their own crops, redeems their own holdings. The rest are hired hands, the agricultural proletariat.

Chile is a rich country, but she leads the world in infant mortality: twenty-five out of every hundred die in the first year, five to six are born dead. Chile also leads in gripe and syphilis; she has an excessive tb rate, in spite of a climate like California's, and the life expectancy is only twenty-two years, lower than in India.

In October 1938 the Popular Front ended a period of reaction by electing to the presidency Pedro Aguirre Cerda, leader of the Radical Party. The victory was far from complete as the conservative parties kept their majority in the Chilean Parliament while the industrialists, mineowners, and large landholders continued to dominate national life. The Popular Front consisted of Radicals, Socialists, and Communists, plus the Chilean Trade Union Confederation. The Radicals, who held the largest parliamentary group and most of the Cabinet posts, were far from united on the militant program which had won them their election. Aguirre himself gave an ominous interview soon after he had been elected. He called for "discipline among the masses" and asked the people to "have confidence in their rulers." The French Popular Front, he said, had failed because the masses had pushed the government into advancing too rapidly; he was determined to resist such haste. Meanwhile an active fascist organization, the Popular Socialist Vanguard, kept the country in turmoil by its threatened putsches. The Trotskyites, strongly established in the Socialist Party, tried to disrupt the Popular Front from within. Shortly after the election a disastrous earthquake weakened the country's economy, further embarrassing the new government.

The Popular Front election program had promised: expropriation of the large estates; land for the people; gradual nationalization of foreign owned industries, mines, and public utilities; state control of the banks; higher wages; control of the cost of living; a large low-cost housing program. Between the timidity of the government, its precarious hold on power, and the weak economic position of the country, very little of this program was carried out. If the popular standard of living was to rise, the profits of American and British capitalists would have to fall. The example of Mexico showed how bitterly foreign business interests would fight encroachment on their positions. Aguirre was unwilling to take the risk. What the masses gained under the Popular Front they won through their own efforts, aided by their new freedom to organize and express their will. The Chilean Trade Union Federation, CTCH, grew rapidly. Popular demand forced the government to nationalize a few consumers' goods industries such as the bakeries.

## DIFFICULTIES MULTIPLIED

The war has multiplied the Popular Front's difficulties economically and politically. Like most Latin-American countries Chile must sell abroad her raw materials in order to provide foreign exchange to buy the imports she needs. Because she is a debtor country and must send money abroad to pay foreign investors, the value of her exports must, on the average, exceed that of her imports. While the war has increased the importance of Chile's war materials, such as copper and nitrates, it has cut the country off from most of her European markets and left her at the mercy of Wall Street. Since Chile now buys more from the United States than she exports to this country, her financial position grows more unfavorable, more dependent on financial aid from Washington, and thus—more at the mercy of the latter's imperialist policy. Thus far the Roosevelt administration has tried to gain its ends by subtlety rather than force. The US Export-Import Bank has accompanied a \$12,000,000 loan to Chile with pressure for a break with the Communists and formation of a "safe" government. This policy has had some success among the Radicals and Socialists. At the Havana Conference Finance Minister Schnake, a Socialist, endorsed a resolution calling for cooperation among the American republics for the repression of "subversive" revolutionary movements. The Chilean Communist Party has demanded that he explain his attitude.

Economic pressure from the warring powers is of course supplemented by the work of their political agents within Chile. Nazi Germany, temporarily barred from the Chilean

market, conducts a thorough and expensive propaganda campaign, organizing the large German minority and supporting a terrorist party, the Popular Socialist Vanguard. Recently the Vanguard's leader, Jorge Gonzalez von Marees, declared that his former democratic position had been only camouflage and he had always been faithful to Nazism and to his European models, Hitler and Mussolini. No doubt a victorious Nazi Germany would seriously threaten Chilean independence. At present, however, the United States holds all the advantages. It is interesting to notice, in view of the *Times'* charges of Communist-Nazi cooperation in Chile, that von Marees is cooperating with Chilean backers of the Roosevelt administration in an anti-Communist campaign. His extremist tactics make him a provocateur for the more "moderate" conservative groups.

A bill to outlaw the Communist Party, introduced by a conservative senator and backed by some of the Radicals, is pending in the Chilean Parliament. While President Aguirre has denounced this openly anti-democratic move, he himself recently expelled from office the Communist mayor of Valparaiso, on the charge that he had encouraged city employees to go to Communist meetings on the city's time. Valparaiso is Chile's chief port and second largest city; it may also soon be one of the naval bases granted the United States. Aguirre has taken a dangerous step toward yielding fatally to pressure from the Roosevelt administration. Rightist Radical maneuvers for the creation of a Centrist bloc, leaving the Socialists and Communists isolated, seem to have failed for the present, but only strong popular protest will force the Radicals into consistent support of the Popular Front.

#### SOCIALISTS CALLED CONGRESS

The Socialist Party wavers between militant anti-imperialism and lesser-evil acceptance of Washington's "protection." Last summer it moved toward closer relations with the Communists by expelling its Trotskyite wing. Its leaders cannot help knowing that the Communist Party is their own first line of defense. If they permit the suppression of the Communists, their own turn will come soon. The Chilean oligarchs will not leave any working class organization, however feeble, to dispute their power. The Chilean Socialists called a Congress of Latin American leftist parties (excluding the Communists) which only exposed their contradictions. A right-wing Social Democrat from Argentina stated that he rejected the concept "imperialism" as a Communist term of doubtful meaning. Marmaduke Grove, leader of the Chilean Socialists, defined the war as "the result of an implacable struggle between the Liberal Democratic Imperialists and the Totalitarian Imperialists," and concluded:

Between the two imperialisms the Chilean Socialist Party at least thinks that the democratic one in the manner in which President Roosevelt expresses it, is much more likely than the totalitarian one to

reach an understanding which would permit the saving of the political independence, and economic readjustment . . . of some countries.

Other delegates, however, refused to fall into the lesser-evil line. The congress had been called with the idea of creating a sort of international of Latin American nationalist and socialist parties—including Mexico's PRM and Peru's APRA—in support of the Roosevelt policies. It had little mass support and reached no definite conclusion.

#### COMMUNIST PLENUM

In this tense situation a Plenum of the Communist Party met on October 5. It was faced with two difficult tasks. First, it had to cleanse and strengthen its own ranks for the struggle ahead. Its General Secretary, Carlos Contreras Labarca, outlined the necessary steps. As in the case of the Mexican Communist Party, the Party in Chile had been too much influenced by its petty-bourgeois associates. Reluctant to annoy its allies it had not led the masses with sufficient militancy. The Party must weed out bureaucracy, insure more democracy within its ranks, and a more proletarian leadership. One member of its parliamentary group was expelled for corruption. A rather curious conflict with Free-Masonry, a powerful bourgeois-radical force in Latin America, had to be faced. Practically all the Chilean Radical and Socialist leaders, such as Aguirre, Schnake, and Grove, are Masons, and Socialist-Radical leadership dominates the Masonic organization. It was obvious that the Masons were trying to work within the Communist Party for their own ends. The Communist Plenum decided that while it was not hostile to Masonry as an ally, membership in both organizations at once was impossible.

Contreras analyzed the political situation in detail. The Popular Front, he pointed out, could be revived only by pressure from the masses, not by negotiations among the leaders of the parties. Popular Front committees, uniting the people for struggle, must be set up throughout the country in preparation for the election next March. How could the people be expected to vote for a regime which had promised them much and given them little? The workers saw their wage increases swallowed up in the cost of living. Unemployment was rising. The housing program had never been fulfilled—the workers still lived in hovels. The Popular Front's land expropriation policy had given land to only 350 peasants. The holdings of the 300 largest estate owners remained almost exactly equal to the total holdings of Chile's 160,000 small proprietors. The plantation workers were in a state of peonage. The Popular Front should nationalize the large estates without compensation. The Popular Front should carry out its original policy of nationalizing the foreign-owned industries—with workers controlling their management—reimbursing the owners according to the true value of the properties. To pay for such a program, the rich should be taxed. As for foreign policy, Contreras remarked:

The real patriots will fight against every imperialist interference in our economic and political life, and will use the present situation, in which our exploiters are fighting among themselves, to advance the agrarian and anti-imperialist revolution and gain the social and national liberation of our country.

. . . If we are attacked we shall defend ourselves! But national defense must be the task of the people, not of the imperialist powers, our oppressors, whose kind of "defense" we know. Yankee imperialism will "defend" our independence, as some who call themselves Socialists claim, only in order to make us more completely its colony; we, the workers, the peasants, the people, will defend ourselves.

But to assure the defense of our country, we must have a social policy which will bring prosperity to the masses. The whole people must learn the use of arms, so that everyone can be mobilized if the nation is in danger. . . . We must develop a national heavy industry, shipyards, arsenals, a fleet, railroads, good motor roads.

We must tighten our bonds with the other peoples of Latin America and the people of the United States.

Chile cannot become self-sufficient, though she can build up domestic industries and diversify production. She has, however, two possible ways of escape from her semi-colonial position. She can expand her trade with Latin American countries that produce goods complementary to her own. Moves in this direction are now going on throughout Latin America, since even the most reactionary governments desire the better bargaining position which economic independence would give them. The chief difficulty in inter-American trade is the lack of processing industries. Before Latin American countries can use their crude oil, tin and copper ore, etc., they must send these materials to distant industrial powers which have the equipment to turn them into finished products. For example, Chile smelts only part of her copper. A second alternative in foreign trade would be to develop trade relations with the Soviet Union, recently demanded by the influential newspaper, *El Siglo*.

That the Chilean people are not resigned to collapse of the Popular Front was seen recently when the Popular Socialist Vanguard called an anti-Communist rally in Santiago. The Vanguard meeting drew under 10,000 people, while a Popular Front counter-rally of 40,000 on the same night was addressed by leaders of all the Popular Front parties.

The pressure being exerted on Chile is the same as that felt by the American people; it comes from the same source. American imperialism is making a desperate effort to retrieve and tighten its hold over the semi-colonies to the south, at the very time that these semi-colonies are desperately striving to become free nations—a titanic struggle. The showdown will come by the elections of March 1941. The Popular Front can break the reactionary control of the legislature and open a new phase of its service to the Chilean people. To do that, it must remain united.

FRANK T. BAKER.



# Silos into Powder Plants

Simon Gerson tells the story of how Washington brass hats drove 450 Illinois families from the land. From boom town to doom town. Real estate agents and army colonels.

"You are commanded this day," he said, "by His Majesty's orders. . . .  
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings and cattle of all kinds  
Forfeited be to the crown, and that you yourself from this province  
Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell there  
Even as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people!  
Prisoners now I declare you, for such is His Majesty's pleasure!"  
—*Evangeline*, by H. W. Longfellow.

Joliet, Ill.

**B**RASS-HAT Washington has won its first blitzkrieg. In the name of national defense and E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., the embattled farmers of Will County, Illinois, have been routed. The roads are not yet choked with refugees but they soon may be.

Local business men are in a dither of pleasureable anticipation, and in little Wilmington (population 1,741) the bank has redecorated its front in ivory finish and blue glass. The Hornsby ten-cent store has been remodeled with red-and-tan and swinging doors; tavern keepers are stocking up, real estate speculators are grabbing lots.

Yes sir, Uncle Sam has come to town in fertile northeastern Illinois' Will County, come with all the trappings of a war boom and the elements of a national scandal: the arbitrary selection of a site, the high-pressuring by real estate salesmen, the eviction of farmers from their land, the feverish speculation . . . and the inevitable letdown.

For Uncle Sam is building two giant manufacturing plants in Will County on 41,000 acres of the most lush corn country in the nation. Rimmed by a twenty-one-mile fence, seven feet high, the new military reservation is set between the Kankakee and Desplaines Rivers and will occupy most of Wilmington, more than half of Florence, and a chunk of four other townships. Schools, churches, cemeteries, roads, and 450 farm families will have to go: the Defense Commission and the War Department have decided that this area is most suitable for strategic and geographic reasons. The situation is sad, says Joliet realtor John B. Anderson, and the plight of his country neighbors reminds him of the Acadian farmers immortalized by Longfellow; but the plants will be "supercolossal" and, anyway, we all have to sacrifice for defense.

## BLITZKRIEG BROKE

The blitzkrieg over Will County, as blitzkriegs do, came suddenly. On September 20, farmers reached into mail boxes to find their newspapers announcing in shrieking headlines that the government would locate a \$14,000,000 gunpowder plant and an \$11,000,-

000 shell loading plant in Will County. Both would be owned by the federal government but operated privately. The powder plant, to be known as the Kankakee Ordnance Works, was to be operated by du Pont and constructed by the firm of Stone and Webster. The shell loading plant, to be known as the Elwood Ordnance Works, was to be built and operated by Sanderson and Porter. Both would be supervised by army officers.

Most farmers found the story incredible. Figures were astronomical — \$25,000,000 worth of construction in the county within ten months; weekly payrolls of \$500,000 while the plants were in operation. The farmers were told they had to get off the land under thirty-, sixty-, or ninety-day notices—after the government made some sort of settlement, of course. Why, it *couldn't* be. The government wouldn't take the farm from a man whose grandfathers had worked it. But realization of the War Department's purpose came fast. Indignation boiled over. Protest meetings were held, telegrams beat down on Cong. Chauncey Reed, and a representative of the farmers flew to Washington. The government had to change the site, use old strip mining land or less fertile areas eight miles south. But the government was inflexible and the option-seeking real estate sharks voracious. All doubt was removed after elderly Col. R. D. Valliant, procurement officer of the US Army, addressed a packed farmers' mass meeting in Wilmington on September 24.

War [said the colonel] is possibly approaching our borders and the danger is recognized by the government to such an extent that laws have been passed making it possible for the nation to arm and defend itself against attack. In providing the nation with its supplies and munitions of war, the production and loading of powder is important. . . . The site (Will County) has received the approval of the highest authorities in Washington, of the President's advisory council, and of the White House itself. *I have been ordered to procure this site immediately . . . I am under orders to procure this site and no other. . . . I cannot give you a week's time or a day's time, or an hour's time.* [Emphasis mine—SWG.]

There was no mistaking the military fist. The farmers' lands were to be purchased by the government in short order at prices fixed by the real estate agents. If the farmers didn't like it, the government would condemn the property and let a federal court fix a "fair" price. The farmers continued the fight but in an atmosphere of hopelessness and bitter resentment. For the tenant farmers, who constitute roughly half the 450 families involved, the situation was catastrophic.

Clair Hemphill, twenty-eight-year-old tenant farmer of Elwood, was husking corn when

we drove into his field. He shouted over the noisy put-put-put of a tractor motor that he'd be glad to explain his situation to us. "Yes," he said, "I guess I'll have to get off about December 15. This is a sort of wedding anniversary present for the wife and me. We were married in November a year ago.

"It sure is tough on the tenants. They haven't a thing in the world after they get out. They can't re-establish themselves after they sell their machinery and livestock. And they've got to sell their equipment and livestock at a loss at auction sales. Why, only the other day, Ray Morgan up here had to sell a \$1,400 combine which he used for only a few years, at \$200. And you can't rent a decent farm around here any more. They're all rented."

He smiled wryly. "But I'm not so sorry for myself as I am for dad—he'll be sixty-five next birthday. He was born in that house over there on his own property. He takes pride in farming, giving that earth limestone and phosphate. He loves farming—that's his life. He's spent more than forty years at it and he can't ever find anything like it."

## FARMERS BITTER

Farmer Raymond Morgan, leader of the opposition to the plant sites, was laid up with lumbago when we visited his 313-acre place with its impeccably kept buildings. But it wasn't his ailment that made him bitter. "Those real estate men," he snorted. "They've used Al Capone methods and bought property all over this place for less than it's worth. I'm fighting 'em in court. My family farmed on this place for a hundred years and never had a mortgage on it. It was settled by my grandparents and I was born on it. Why, damn it, man, it's my life investment."

Buxom Mrs. Morgan echoed her husband. "That's why we're fighting this thing. Why before we got in touch with Washington, *Grapes of Wrath* had nothing on us. Neighbors were told the government would tractor them right off. And the tenants! they give them a measly thousand dollars and take their livelihoods away from them for maybe all time."

Mrs. Lloyd Griggs, who with her husband rents 470 acres which they have farmed for twenty-four years, seemed stunned. "I don't know what they want all that good land for," she repeated over and over again. "I don't know. What are they going to do with gunpowder if people got nothing to eat?"

But Raymond E. Herman, the government's chief real estate agent in the vast deal, feels quite chipper about it all. Perhaps it's because he's receiving a five percent commission on the more than \$6,000,000 purchase, which should bring his gross to over \$300,000. Deducting

commissions Herman in turn passes on to Joliet real estate men, he stands to net the tidy sum of about \$150,000 for less than six months' work. A hearty, talkative, gray-haired executive type, Herman waxed confidential at his La Salle Street, Chicago, offices. "Yes sir," he boomed, "I got options on 35,000 acres to date and only two condemnation proceedings. Shows you we're treating those fellows fair. Frankly, we're overpaying those farmers a considerable amount. Yes *sir*, they're being treated liberally."

The tenants?

Mr. Herman stared vaguely. "The tenants—ah, yes, I have a good deal of sympathy for 'em. We try to take care of 'em all right."

How did he happen to get the juicy plum of federal agent for that particular job? Mr. Herman really didn't know. "They just came to me," he confessed shyly. "I've never been in politics so I sure don't have any influence."

But if the arrogant methods of land acquisition for the Will County munitions plants have Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford overtones, the actual operation of the plant will be in something of the concentration camp style. Surrounded by a seven-foot fence covered with barbed wire, the workers will have to carry badges and be fingerprinted. Applications for employment have been prepared in cooperation with the FBI, and "subversive" elements will not be employed; whether the definition of "subversive" includes active trade unionists was naturally not made known. Lt. Col. Theodore C. Gerber, chief army official of the Kankakee works (du Pont), grew steely-eyed when I questioned him about it.

"The labor policy? The contractor, the du Pont organization, will have to decide that."

"But how about the government? Won't it insist on compliance with the National Labor Relations Act, minimum wage laws, and so forth?"

The colonel examined the end of his cigar intently. "Ye-es, I guess so," he agreed reluctantly. "We don't care whether it's open or closed shop—as long as we don't have any interruptions. Both of the plants are permanent arsenals to be operated by the Ordnance Department. In order to facilitate matters du Pont is going to operate under my supervision and Sanderson and Porter under the supervision of another army officer. They'll have to determine policy." He smiled self-deprecatingly. "We can't."

"But about this business of the government spending all the money, buying this fertile land, and constructing these enormous plants while the du Pont people come in and ladle up profits for operating?"

Colonel Gerber knew the answer to that one. "They've got to be given some protection," he said solemnly. "When a private individual can't take the risk, the government's got to take it."

I tried another tack. "How about the permanency of the project? This is a hell of a big undertaking to fold up in a few years."

"Sir," he answered, "I don't keep my fingers



EXODUS, by Georges Schreiber

on the pulse of international affairs but I do know that sooner or later economic conflict breaks out into armed conflict. We've got to be prepared up to the hilt."

"You've heard the story that after the 'emergency' is over these plants can be used for manufacturing nylon or plastics or some other peacetime use. What do you think?"

The colonel smiled indulgently. "Well, there's a certain amount of the chemical engineering machinery that could be used for peacetime chemical manufacturing."

"Now, colonel, one last question—isn't it true that the machinery for gunpowder is no more useful for the manufacture of nylon hose than newspaper presses are for knitting sweaters and that any promise to the contrary is just so much poppycock?"

The colonel just smiled.

A somewhat different tune is sung by the Joliet Association of Commerce which takes credit for having brought the munitions plant to Will County and points with pride at the fact that the plants will have a payroll of nearly \$500,000 a week or about \$24,000,000 a year. Charles J. Kellam, managing director of the Association, was careful to point out that the plants would double the county's present payrolls. "The merchants," he began sonorously, "are alive to the possibility of attracting a large portion of that business to Joliet even though much of the labor will come from a fifty-mile radius. Then, of course, there's going to be an awful demand for housing."

"Have your business men thought much about the possibility that this gigantic enterprise will fold up in a few years and Joliet and Will County will be left holding the bag, with a lot of workers on relief, good farm land overgrown with weeds, shrunken tax revenues, and a bunch of small merchants who overextended themselves during the boom?"

Mr. Kellam fixed me with an icy stare.

"Speaking for the business man," he replied, "when sacrifice has to be made, he can charge it to the price of freedom."

But not all Joliet business men and public officials find freedom an item in their ledgers. Some of them intend to go easy, recalling all too vividly what happened after the first world war. Joliet's mayor, George T. Jones, a genial politician of the old kill-the-traffic-ticket-he's-a-neighbor school, made it clear that he had no illusions about anything but the present. While cooperating to get the last cent of business for Joliet out of the war rush, the mayor knows it's simply all economic marijuana and that the purple and gold dreams can't last. "That's right," he said, "there's absolutely no guarantee for the future. It'll go boom—up—and then zoom—down—after the hysteria is over. Nope, Joliet's not building any new sewers or laying any new sidewalks or making any new expenditures. We're watching our step."

"How about the county commissioners?"

The mayor chuckled, "Boy, they're howling—losing \$40,000 a year in taxes since all that private farm property is being taken off the tax rolls and turned over to the government which doesn't pay taxes."

Everywhere in Will County one heard the same among thoughtful people—what about the inevitable economic hangover after the great jag is over? What about the future? Can we live forever on the blood-flecked fool's gold of a war boom? Will Joliet and Wilmington and Elwood and scores of other American cities describe the same tragic course of boom town to doom town?

A congressional investigation into this whole situation might do something to defend the real America—the America represented by the sturdy farmers of Will County. For today the American dream which they have cherished has become a design for dying.

SIMON W. GERSON.

# Aid to Britain Today, War Tomorrow

Lord Lothian throws the forward pass to William Allen White. What "aid short of war" has meant. Where we are, and what we must do. An editorial.

**M**R. WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE has come forward with a new slogan. Instead of giving Britain "all aid short of war," he suggests we make it "short of declaring war." And in a speech before the Union League Club where he was introduced by Thomas W. Lamont (the conscience and strategist for J. P. Morgan and Co.), William Allen White goes even further. He proposes that the President be relieved of his responsibility for this "undeclaration of war," that Congress endorse this program in its own name.

Quite obviously this is only the beginning of a new phase in American foreign policy. It was only a cloud on the horizon the day after Mr. Roosevelt's re-election, but now a veritable tornado is blowing up in the radio and press. Suggestive dispatches from London tell us what the British would like to have America do. The editorialists bid us scrutinize the word "all" in the phrase "all aid to Britain." On top of the forty-six flying fortresses which have been allocated to Churchill by the rule of the President's almighty thumb, several old and many new proposals are being heard. Lord Lothian steps off the clipper to ask for loans; a financial commission from Argentine wants American dollars to finance agricultural exports to Britain; American destroyers are asked to convoy goods from Canada to the mid-Atlantic. Some voices even demand that the remaining neutrality laws, which prevent American ships and sailors from entering the war zone, be junked. There is such a strange unanimity in these proposals that we suspect the editors of our free press, the champions of open diplomacy, are responding to some memorandum circulated for their private information only. Some heavy conferences are taking place in the secluded chambers of the fashionable hotels; we are evidently on the eve of a new wave of "public opinion"; and Mr. Gallup is already burnishing up his ever-ready lamp of truth.

## WAR WITHOUT DECLARATION

Finally, the President of Harvard University, James Bryant Conant, who has fired many an instructor for associating Harvard's fair name with off-campus political activity, now proposes in a radio broadcast on Thanksgiving eve, that "the American people decide without reservation to place this country's resources at Britain's disposal." After which, Mr. Conant casually continues, "it becomes purely a matter of strategy whether at some later time active belligerency is required."

For a full year, NEW MASSES has argued that the policy of aiding Britain would not, and was not designed to, keep us out of war, indeed that we were getting shorter and shorter of war itself. We have insisted that

the accumulation of measures in aid of Britain, innocent and fairminded as they pretended to be, would inevitably reach a qualitatively new phase—the belligerency of the United States itself. Now the president of Harvard agrees. He takes another leaf from the textbook of fascism and proposes that we make war without declaring it. How far Hitler and Mussolini and the Mikado have gone on this very formula!

What was the inner meaning of Mr. Roosevelt's policy, and how did it work? In the first place, it was a shrewd and profitable arrangement for the men who own the basic industries and resources of the nation. They realized that Britain's economic and strategic position had been undermined; they feared the effect of German competition on their trade, their colonial markets, their own strategic situation, "their way of life." They saw in Britain's plight the opportunity of encouraging the British to destroy America's competitor, at the same time compelling Britain to lean heavily on American goods and resources. The facts show that this course has been successful even beyond their fondest hopes. Production for war purposes now takes nearly 50 percent of American trade, and profits from war production have made the year 1939-40 something for the masters of American industry to be really thankful for.

There has not been a shred of magnanimity in this policy. On the contrary, while the average citizen is implored to contribute bundles for Britain, an overcoat, a dollar bill, perhaps a rusty rifle, the United States has commanded a stiff price for every dollar's worth of its assistance. In exchange for destroyers, Mr. Roosevelt demanded and secured a string of air and naval bases, which gave the American armed forces a commanding position from Newfoundland clear through to the Equator, a position which places the Canadian and the Latin-American peoples in the shadow of American guns. Lifting the embargo last November made our munitions and war materials available to England—at cost plus plenty of percent—but American business men have utilized the British blockade to oust their German competitors from Latin America, and are now pressing their British "cousins" to the wall. American ships have been kept from the war zones, although for eight months they traded profitably with Italy and Spain, not to mention the heavy trade that continues with Japan. And all this time American shipping companies have not only disposed of their old hulks to the British, and are now taking orders for more, but they have penetrated into the British empire in the South Pacific, reaching even into the profitable commerce with India.

The military agreement with Canada was simply the diplomatic expression of the hard

fact that behind the facade of British imperial power, it is American capital which rules Canada. It is American monopoly, with its \$4,000,000,000 in the most profitable fields of investment, which has carried out a cold invasion across our undefended northern frontier. German big business has long been envious of this very stratagem. They also would prefer to befriend the British empire, rather than fight it. They too would have the torries in control while they reaped the dividends; it is by way of symbolic suggestion that they have not yet themselves taken over France's empire. It is only because the German capitalist structure is weaker, its fabric worn much thinner, its hunger so ravenous, that the German ruling class is impelled to appropriate by physical force that which the Americans get by their shrewd policy of assistance to Great Britain "short of war."

## POLICY OF DECEPTION

Above all, this has been a policy of deception of the American people. Mr. Roosevelt and his many friends appreciate how deep was the disillusion with the slogans and the outcome of the first world war. They have therefore combined an appeal to our self-interest, with an appeal to our humanity. They have exploited hatred of fascism (which they discouraged in years gone by) in order to break down the deeply rooted opposition to another war. They have argued that unless we give Great Britain help we cannot survive as a nation; they have insisted that such help could be given without a commitment to war itself; they have appealed to our sense of solidarity, our humane sympathies with the British people; they have presented the issue as though the sole alternative were the victory of one side or another. Hesitantly, it is true, and with considerable embarrassment, they have conjured up a new and better world which is to emerge from this struggle. And the ugly brilliance of it all lies in the fact that by exploiting our noblest instincts they have maneuvered us into precisely what we wished to avoid, another descent into barbarism.

These arguments can be taken one by one, but they do not give us plausible grounds for entering this war. It is true for example that the common people of England are suffering fearfully under the German assault from the air. Not only did the British ruling class undermine every instrument for peace in Europe, but after mulcting the British Treasury for years they left the nation totally unprotected. All last winter the metal trusts coined handsome sums in the manufacture of millions of tin can covers, the Anderson shelters so-called, which proved criminally useless when the bombings began. And while Professor Haldane's deep-shelter proposals were rejected, the upper

classes prepared their palatial homes with bombproof basements, equipped with every convenience, servant quarters and all. Even when the people rushed to the subways, miserable as they are and lacking in sanitary facilities, the government had to be dissuaded from ousting the populace by force. This is why we have only the utmost contempt for the upper classes, and all their great minds, why we extend the deepest sympathy to the average Briton who, like his fellow human beings everywhere, faces adversity with heroism and defiance.

But if the Royal Air Force can be believed, the people of central Europe are suffering more than we know. And will be suffering more when the flying fortresses get across. Herbert Hoover himself insists that hunger stalks in the rear of the opposing fronts. Obviously, therefore, sympathy alone cannot be made the basis for supporting one side against the other.

No one has to argue with us, nor does it have to be argued among people generally, what the consequences of a German victory would mean. When the great newspapers of this country were coyly speculating on the "great good that Hitler was doing for his people," we told the unvarnished truth. When Mr. William Knudsen, of General Motors, Mr. Henry Ford, and other pillars of society had nothing but praise for Hitler, and some of them were returning from Germany with medals from Goering (which they have not yet returned), it was not NEW MASSES which pulled its punches. We shared none of the illusions about the Munich agreement. Our opposition to a British victory or American participation in this war does not rest, therefore, on partiality for the other side.

The fact is that we do not favor either side. It insults the intelligence, the strength and power of the American people to say that the choice is support for either side.

We are profoundly convinced that none of the problems of Europe will be served by the victory of British imperialism, alone or assisted by the United States. Americans are a pragmatic people. Experience is presumably the ultimate test of their convictions. The experience of the past twenty years has shown that every capitalist statesman, conservative, liberal or Socialist, has betrayed the faith of the millions. The war itself is proof that they are incapable of anything but blind devastation. On the basic questions of abolishing unemployment, of giving the common man the abundance which machinery makes possible, of eliminating race hatreds and prejudice, the statesmen of the capitalist world have nothing to offer. Even those who thought and acted in the boldest terms, within the limits of their education and interest, have demonstrated their bankruptcy today. And by an evil alchemy, they are converting their own achievements into offerings for the gods of war. This is the hard truth of the past twenty years. And who dares to say that with these same statesmen pursuing the same policies, the next twenty years would be different?

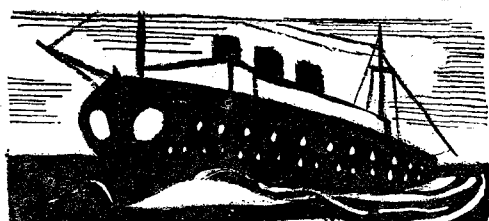
And what do they offer us when this war

is over? Only a shadowy slight wraith of the promises they made a generation ago. Here, in fact, the rulers of the capitalist world are doubly unconvincing. They ask us for confidence and faith but they have only the slimmest confidence in themselves: witness Churchill's absolute unwillingness to define his war aims, much less the kind of world he hopes to build when the war is over. They are so unsure of themselves in the face of *this* war, that they are continually compelled to fight the last one all over again. Apologizing for the future, they must justify the unjustifiable past.

But it is when they put the matter in terms of our existence as a nation, our historical continuity as a people, that they reveal their own Achilles' heel. Inadvertently, they disclose that what they mean by America is a capitalist America: the America whose resources they own and have misused, the America which they have misruled and insist upon misruling further according to their way of life.

This is precisely the point. *What is at stake in this war is not the nation, but capitalism.* It is not democracy, but imperialism and its whole system of relations, which stands or falls in this war. It is because the web of imperialist relations on a world scale has worn very thin that the American ruling class, which feels itself the reservoir of capitalism, insists upon war. It is not even to save the British empire, the foundation of world imperialist relations, but to subordinate that empire to the American empire while at the same time defeating Germany, that the masters of America want war. They wish to enter this war not only for the *Gleichschaltung* of Latin America, nor simply for profit, but because they fear that millions of Americans are distinguishing the true national interest from the interest of the capitalist class. It is to smash the labor movement, to divide and castrate it, to eliminate the emergent consciousness that *capitalism is the enemy* that they impel us into this struggle.

There is a simple litmus to test the character of this war. If it were for the extension of democracy, a great democratic resurgence would fill the people. Our young men would not fear conscription but greet it. Our mothers and fathers would not watch each day with alarm but find in each day new occasion for pride. If this were a war for the true national interest, it could not be accompanied by the orgy of graft and corruption that is looting Washington today. And no figure such as Martin Dies could come up from the sewers to demand, with unparalleled insolence, no less than \$5,000,000 for his un-American committee. This war would be accompanied, as was the war in Spain, by a clean breath of national resurgence, by a heroic lit-



erature, by a great renaissance against which sacrifices and difficulties would appear small and insignificant.

The alternatives with which they confront us, therefore, are not the real alternatives. They do not exhaust our choices and therefore we decline to make the choice. Twenty-five years ago, the working-class movement in Europe foundered on this dilemma. The German Socialists justified the Kaiser on the grounds that a German victory would liberate the millions of slaves in the British empire. The French, the British, and in part the American Socialists indulged in the breathless fantasy of liberating the bleeding peoples of the Austro-Hungarian empire, the Armenians from the Turkish Sultan. But by supporting its own imperialism, neither side liberated anyone, and simply perpetuated the conditions of its own enslavement. Thereby the chance was lost of setting the example which would have abolished imperialism as a world system. And who can doubt today, remembering how revolution in backward Russia rocked the world, that the same example in Germany or England would not have changed the course of history? The cost of socialism, the liberals and Socialists argued, would be too great; thus we have paid the price of fascism. The bloodshed and violence would be intolerable; thus we are paying the price of a second world war. A revolutionary course could only benefit some foreign power was the slander yesterday as it is today; thus we have paid the cost of perpetuating foreign domination over entire peoples and continents. And now we have the privilege of a repeat performance.

The position which NEW MASSES upholds, the position of uncompromising struggle against our own ruling class, must have seemed difficult twenty-five years ago. But Lenin showed that it was the only course and infinitely easier than all others. Today this course may seem to be even more difficult. And yet, the average man and woman today is capable of consciousness and action that will undermine the warmongers even more quickly than any of us imagine. The world position of imperialism is far weaker than it was when Lenin completed his immortal analysis of imperialism in the little town in Switzerland in 1916. The old world is shattered and is shattering itself. Socialist power on one-sixth of the earth, Lenin's great achievement, emerges as a powerful magnetic influence, the moral reserve of millions of men and women behind both opposing fronts.

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE and James Bryant Conant and Ralph Ingersoll propose American entry into the war. The President declares that all possible aid to Britain is being given now, as though to invite a new wave of propaganda for loans and ships, and still bolder proposals for full participation in the conflict. But the men and women who must do the suffering and dying: they are yet to be heard from. It is their voice which must break through the blockade of the radio and press; theirs is the power that must assert itself through the critical weeks that lie ahead.

# Strictly Personal

by RUTH MCKENNEY

## Big Cash Prize Contest!

WHAT ten books changed your life and rattled your teeth and made you what you are today, barring incidents out of real rather than literary life? I raise the question because a young friend of mine wrote in the other day to say that her senior (high school) English teacher had assigned the class the pretty task of investigating the reading habits of American writers. I gathered that Katie, who is a young woman of sense and heart, wrote in to me in the hope that I would start off with *Das Kapital* and add nine other books of interest and importance, such as Lenin, Stalin, Browder, et cetera. The idea being that if that doesn't set Miss Gazooks, the English teacher, back on her heels nothing ever will.

Well, naturally I obliged Katie, although I think Miss Gazooks is going to get quite a start to discover that I was mooching over *Imperialism* in the original Russian, at the tender age of ten. (You have to put down the book that staggered your life as the shadows of adolescence began blotting out carefree infancy.) But now that the letter is safely mailed, I begin to feel like a *New Republic* contributor. Remember the series they ran when all our high-toned thinkers wrote in to say that the book that really addled their tender brains was either the Sanskrit-English dictionary, or Whitehead's something or other, or tomes entitled, *Some Reflections on Einstein's Theory of Relativity With Thirteen New Original Calculus Formulas*. I hate to be rude, but about all you can say to that series is just plain "Nuts." Or to put it politely, "Phuie!"

"IVANHOE"

Now, barring little fibs for the benefit of Miss Gazooks, my own list of literary mental shocks begins with *Ivanhoe*. Mr. Walter Scott made my eyes pop. Who could ever forget Rebecca clambering around the masonry of the castle while that beast of a Crusader chased her around and around her cell, with very evil intentions? I never liked Rowena much; she was something of a stick. But Rebecca was fine. And incidentally, I was just thinking today that undoubtedly my hatred of anti-Semitism began way back in Prospect Grammar School with the fair Rebecca.

Number two on my list was Emil Ludwig's *Life of Napoleon*. I wept so hard all through the final pages that I could hardly see the type, and I gathered the impression that Mons. Napoleon, *L'Empereur*

was the kindest, bravest, finest, most gallant, most intelligent man that ever lived. For years I went around mentally snarling because they sent him to Elba, and my anti-English bias, already strong owing to Grandpa Flynn, whose father was hung by a low-down tax collector, got tremendous impetus from the tragic story of the little General on the white horse.

I seem to have spent a confused adolescence, because my next two favorites, circa age thirteen, were *Peter and Alexis*, the turgid opus of the Russian mystic, and John Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga*. *Peter and Alexis* fascinated me. I read it through four times and the nice lady who ran the East Cleveland Public Library got very worried about it. She kept suggesting *Little Women*, evidently as an antidote, but I stuck faithfully to the frightful tale of the king who tortured his son to death, complete with trimmings—including a fey little scene of three hundred Russian peasants burning themselves to death owing to a mistaken religious idea. Every time I read this scene I couldn't eat any dinner, and I must say that *Peter* set my ideas of sex and history back at least ten years.

The *Forsyte Saga* was something else again. You remember Mr. Galsworthy and his idea that Beauty was All? I cried so hard over the lovely Irene and that stinko of a Soames torturing her (mentally, of course) that I felt shocked and let down when it turned out later that Soames wasn't such a bad fellow after all. But I never liked him, even if he turned out to be breath of Empire. I never liked the Empire anyway.

And then I struck poetry, aged fifteen. For a year I didn't read any prose at all, except required reading in French class and history books. "Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird" I muttered as I tramped through high school corridors. I concentrated on Keats, and just before I was graduated, my teacher lured me into the Shakespearean sonnets. But the big book for me that year was Amy Lowell's *Life of Keats*, which I knew practically by heart. Ah, sometimes, just sometimes, I could wish I were fifteen again, and hearing my English teacher, who liked me and was a very good person, reading *To the Evening Star*. I still read Keats now and then, but it's not the same as being fifteen and hearing all the great lines for the first, the beautiful first time.

Which makes five. Of course all young people read enormously and I used to get

through at least three books a week. In fact, I still have a diary with a New Year's resolution written in it (my only one for the year 1928): "read five long books or seven short books a week." I don't think I actually read that many but a lot of type flowed across my brain cells before I hit another pair of books that made my hair stand on end, soulfully speaking. By this time I was eighteen. I had never been out of my native state of Ohio, and I was a junior in college, very smug, and enormously ignorant. At which point a beloved and sensible teacher made me read *South Wind* (Norman Douglas). The only way I can say what that book did to me is just the word, "Wow." I read *South Wind* again not long ago—for now, it's a silly and pretentious book. But when I was eighteen—ah, a different matter indeed. I read it through twice in two days, a third time a week later, and started memorizing parts of it the next month. It comes as a shock to a girl right from the grasslands to discover that the Presbyterian ethic is considered neither civilized nor intelligent in other parts of the world.

T. S. ELIOT

And number six, of course (inevitably) was T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* and the first collection of shorter poems. After Mr. Eliot, I began to grow up. The first book I read, in the process of getting to be a human being, was *Man's Fate*. I know now that Mr. Malraux's version of Chinese revolutionary history was wrong. But when I read *Man's Fate* I was twenty-one, and I had never even heard of Lenin, the middle west being that way. When I finished it that first time, I had decided that as soon as I met a Communist, I would ask him for a Party card. *Man's Fate* may be bad history, but I still think it is a great book, one of the best, and for me at least, it was the gateway to the future.

My last three choices may seem confused, but they are honest—Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms*, Louis Aragon's *The Bells of Basle*, and *The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* by Joseph Stalin and others. I make my living writing, and Hemingway has reformed and redirected the manner of American letters; for me, Aragon is the great modern writer. I have read and read and read Marxist literature in the past years, but I really began (however dimly) to understand what Marxism was about, with *The History of the CPSU*. And I guess this is cheating, but I want to add one other—*The Fat Years and the Lean*, by John Stuart and Bruce Minton. Mr. Minton is my husband but even if he weren't, I would still think this first full length Marxist American history is one of the important books of the decade.

Well, there isn't anything about original calculus formulas in my list, but at least I've had a lot of fun reading books. And I am hereby offering a cash prize of five bucks for the best short letter on YOUR ten books, second prize some of the McKenney-Minton household books, autographed, by gum. Come on, readers, tell about Elsie Dinsmore, et cetera.

# The Choice Before Us

The greatest human issues are at stake, writes Samuel Sillen. Intellectuals can either surrender to reaction or carry on the great tradition toward freedom and a classless culture.

NOT long after the Armistice, Romain Rolland issued "A Declaration of Intellectual Independence" which was signed by Henri Barbusse, Jane Addams, Andreas Latzko, Selma Lagerlof, Stefan Zweig, and a number of other world-famous intellectuals. In this historic manifesto, Rolland summarized the disastrous experiences of writers and artists in the World War and projected a program for the days to come. For five long years, he wrote, workers of the mind have been divided by armies, censorship, and the spite of warring nations. To the scourge which swept Europe, a majority of the intellectuals have added an incalculable measure of poisonous hate:

They have hunted in the arsenal of their knowledge, of their memory, of their imagination, for causes old and new, for reasons historical, scientific, logical, and even poetical—to hate. They have laboured to destroy understanding and love among men. And, in so doing, they have disfigured, degraded, lowered, and debased Thought, which they represented. They have made Thought the instrument of passion and (perhaps unconsciously) of the selfish interests of some political or social caste. . . . And now from this savage conflict, whence all the nations involved emerge mangled, impoverished, and, in their souls (although they do not admit it) ashamed and humiliated by their excess of madness, Thought, compromised with them in their struggles, also emerges with them—fallen from its high estate.

Let this bitter experience at least help us for the future, Rolland pleaded:

It is for Humanity that we work, but for the whole of Humanity. We know the People—one, universal—the People which suffers, struggles, falls to rise again, and which ever marches onward on the rough road drenched with its sweat and blood—the People of all men, all equally our brothers.

This ringing challenge to the intellectuals of all lands has steadily gained in pertinence during the twenty-one years since it first appeared in this magazine. Today this challenge is inescapable. This is not a time for pretending. The greatest human issues are at stake. Under the pressure of world events, a vast redrawing of lines is taking place on the cultural front as men are compelled to choose between the alternatives posed by Rolland. Either we enlist once again as servants of an imperialist war policy, or we enlist in a different kind of struggle, Heine's "liberation war of humanity."

The first choice requires, even more inexorably than in the last world war, the disfiguring of intelligence, the abdication of democracy, and the mutilation of our cultural inheritance. In the first three articles of this series, I have tried to suggest that a number of war-intoxicated intellectuals are today, as a generation ago, betraying the most valid ideas in our culture. Their support of an

oppressive economic order in a stage of decay commits them to obscurantism and irrationalism. Their skin-deep anti-fascist slogans lend a false glamour to the war necessities and fascist propulsives of finance capitalism. They can envisage only a future of endless bloody wars to end wars.

## SMALL PORTION

But only those who are deceived by high-pressure publicity techniques can feel that these authors of surrender represent more than a small portion of America's cultural energies. The press has diligently fostered the illusion that there is widespread support, among intellectuals, of the drive toward war and of the fascist measures that are proposed under the pretext of defending our freedom. It has long been obvious that any nonentity who was willing to sign an article or book denouncing the Soviet Union could be acclaimed by the *New York Times* as a keen political scholar, even though he should only warm up the ancient hash of lies and prejudice. And similarly, every prominent recruit to Mr. Roosevelt's war program is hailed as a symbol of cultural tendencies in the United States. The position of a vast body of intellectuals who are standing firm by their progressive convictions is simply not recorded.

Some time ago, *Editor and Publisher*, trade organ of the newspaper publishers, asked Theodore Dreiser for a "brief expression of appreciation for one of the most vital bulwarks of American freedom—an uncensored press." Mr. Dreiser replied, in part:

If Americans knew how far we have already gone toward abolishing our democracy they would rise in anger now in defense of their most precious possession. But millions don't know, because the only sources of information they have deliberately keep them from knowing.

And *Editor and Publisher*, celebrating "an uncensored press," refused to print Mr. Dreiser's remarks.

This incident surprises nobody who has followed the career of a press which ranges from open venality to the hypocritical pretense of printing "all the news that's fit to print." But the atmosphere is so thick with lies, distortions, and innuendoes that even the most critical reader occasionally becomes a victim despite himself. Unless one can get at the news which is omitted, as a matter of policy, one inevitably forms a false picture not merely of the political life of the country, but of the cultural life as well. Thus Mr. Dreiser's statements against the war and his speech in support of the candidacy of Earl Browder—significant expressions of opinion by a distinguished literary figure—have been ignored by all newspapers except labor papers like the *Daily Worker*. On the

other hand, every shallow war-mongering remark by Robert E. Sherwood is blown up as a major event, syndicated, and featured throughout the land. Day in and day out, the papers provide a forum for Red-baiters, but George Seldes' latest book, *Witch Hunt*, exposing Red-baiting as a fascist-minded commercial racket, is not reviewed. (295 of the 300 leading papers which received his two latest books failed to review them.)

Not a single commercial newspaper reported the fact that over 300 writers signed a peace statement issued by the League of American Writers some months ago. This statement is surely a much more profound expression of American literary sentiment than, say, those outrageously bad war poems of Edna Millay's that the nation's press has proudly displayed. It reads, in part:

We point out that the greatest danger to our peace at this time lies in the possibility that the profound anti-fascist sentiments of the American people will be misused to lead them into war.

We yield to no one in our unalterable hatred of and opposition to fascism. We have helped create the genuine anti-fascist spirit of the American people. We maintain, however, that this war in Europe is not one in which they should take part for their own good or for the good of Europe's peoples; on the contrary, we maintain that our participation will result only in the prolongation of the war, in the abolition of our own civil liberties, in the substitution of a tyrannical M-Day control for the rights we cherish, in death lists and purposeless social misery, in cataclysmic depression.

We urge all Americans to combine their strengths, to unite in boldest opposition to the hysteria of the moment, to combat all steps which we know from experience lead directly to war. . . . We call upon all writers to act with maximum effort and courage to the end that America shall not again engage in foreign adventure.

And this forthright statement in behalf of peace, civil liberties, and economic progress—the necessary bases of a flourishing culture—has won the support of the great majority of League members.

If it is "unpatriotic" to write anti-war books about the last war (according to Mr. Roosevelt in his Armistice Day address) imagine the plight of the author who writes books which deal honestly with the situation today. He is simply not published. Some book publishers are still resorting to subterfuge; but many are telling their authors quite frankly that they are in no mood or in no position to accept books which, whatever their literary merit, run counter to the conceptions of the official philosophy. The plain truth is that a book like *The Grapes of Wrath* got in under the wire. A young author dealing with the same theme today is suspected of scheming against national unity. Why is it that no weekly magazine of national distribution out-

side of *NEW MASSES* prints anti-war verse or anti-war stories? Is it because such literary work is not being produced? On the contrary, the number of manuscripts reaching the office of this magazine increases rapidly every month as a result of the fact that the market for realistic writing of any integrity is virtually disappearing by editorial decree. This is a fact, and no one need be deceived about it. For verification, one need only turn to any news-stand.

In 1917, the lady who financed *The Seven Arts* magazine withdrew her funds because the editors insisted on taking a stand against the war. War-patriot Amy Lowell generously offered James Oppenheim \$200 if the magazine would stick to esthetics and leave politics out of the magazine. *The Seven Arts* was forced to suspend publication, and one of its editors, Randolph Bourne, found it difficult, after that, to get even a book review published anywhere.

The historian of the future will have equal cause to laugh ironically at the inflated war laureates of the subsidized literary journals and the three-million circulation magazines who strutted vaingloriously among the advertising columns. The historian will recognize, as William Morris saw many years ago, that the submissive intellectuals were "little better than hangers-on of the non-producing class, from whom they receive a share of their privilege, together with a kind of contemptuous recognition of their position as gentlemen—heaven save the mark!"

But as V. J. Jerome points out in his incisive pamphlet on "Intellectuals and the War":

For every Hicks, or Bates, or Sheean, there are hundreds of decent, modest intellectuals who stand guard at their posts despite reaction's offensive—the legion of militant, steadfast professionals who have taken their place with the working class in struggle for peace and full victory for all the oppressed.

It is not the prima donnas or the tiny coteries or the scramblers for cover that represent the cultural aspirations of the American people. In order to appreciate the most genuine and vital elements in our intellectual life, one must turn to those hundreds of thousands of writers, teachers, artists, students, architects, scientists, and other professionals who collectively express and mold a democratic philosophy. Speaking for his fellow artists at a recent national convention of their union, Rockwell Kent declared: "We have turned our faces to labor—that element of America of which we are a part." And he added that artists, in rejecting the condescending and irresponsible patronage of wealth, had discovered their rightful audiences and their proper sources of belief and inspiration. This is the attitude of a host of cultural workers whose contribution cannot be measured by the fatness of their fees and royalty checks. It is the attitude of courageous theater workers who organize labor and community playhouses in Southern areas where there are no schools above the

sixth grade. It is the attitude of youth and student organizations representing millions of Americans who seek greater cultural opportunities, of progressive teacher-unionists who resolutely defend education against the attacks of bigots and budget-cutters, and of many distinguished scholars and scientists whose work has appeared in *Science and Society*.

#### CONFIDENCE AND SOLIDARITY

A Randolph Bourne who suffered loneliness and isolation twenty-three years ago would find his views echoed today at union meetings, writers' conferences, and conventions of professional workers. In 1917 protests against war hysteria were relatively ineffective and sporadic; in 1940 we are witnessing an infinitely greater demonstration of confidence, solidarity, and understanding on the part of anti-war intellectuals. The effects of a widespread and organized opposition to illiberal tendencies in our national life are profoundly felt. It was this opposition that forced Dr. Butler to retreat from his recent declaration of war and fascism. The vigilance of the American Student Union, the American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom, and the Teachers Union—to name only three groups—was a symptom of a determined and healthy mood shared by many thousands of American intellectuals. It is in the group character of our progressive intellectual movements and in the closeness of their relation to the laboring population as a whole that we find the source of genuine strength and understanding.

Not all the progressive intellectuals, of course, see eye to eye on every specific social issue of the day nor on the ultimate solution to our underlying problems. It is not necessary that they do so in order to work in the common cause, "the People of all men, all equally our brothers," in the words of Romain Rolland. They share a deep belief in what Dr. Max Yergan, the eminent Negro leader and educator, calls "the indivisibility of democracy." They want to feed America and starve the war. Dedicated to the interests of the common man, they strive to conserve the humanist and democratic traditions of our American

culture. They are opposed to the strangulation of our economy by vested interests. They combine an intense nationalism with an equally intense spirit of the international brotherhood of man. They assert themselves against the persistent need of imperialism, native or foreign, to stand on the bent back of colonial peoples.

These intellectuals cannot be dissuaded by the fanatical abuse of Red-baiters or the shrill denunciations of erstwhile liberals. They know that the great tradition they espouse has been opposed at every turning point in our history by a minority which clung to outworn institutions and defended a status quo that had become oppressive. The Tory writers of the eighteenth century, the Bourbon ideologues of Southern slavocracy, the apologists of imperialism in 1917 did not share the vision of full economic and political democracy which is the real American dream. Theirs is the tradition of doom and sterility. Ours is the tradition of hope and growth.

The volume on *Democracy and Social Change* which Dr. Harry F. Ward has just published symbolizes the growing awareness of progressive intellectuals that the essential values of democracy and humanist culture can be realized today only under socialism:

The time has come [writes Dr. Ward] for intellectuals to choose between the needs of the people and the interests of the plutocrats and their allies. The future of the intellectual life lies within the creative workers of all kinds. It is not in the hands of the capitalists and their dependents. Because its liberal elements will be either transformed or repressed by war and reaction, all that allegiance to capitalism can do for the intellectual from now on is to goose-step his mind.

The choice that confronts us is between the goose-stepping of our minds by the support of war and reaction, and the liberation of intelligence through the support of the struggle of all peoples against imperialism, war, and fascism.

It is, in its final expression, the choice between the degradation of culture which is an inevitable characteristic of fascism and the flowering of culture in the Soviet Union which all unbiased minds celebrate. As the old order, based on the exploitation of man by man, approaches its end in a convulsive agony of maniacal slaughter, the meaning of socialism emerges more and more distinctly. The Soviet Union has brought courage and hope to mankind. In the socialist sixth of the earth, the challenge of Romain Rolland has been answered. And this free brotherhood of peoples in turn presents an overwhelming challenge to the other nations of the world: the challenge of peace, equality, and classless culture.

If certain authors of surrender are taking the path of suicide, an increasing number of American cultural workers are choosing the path of fulfillment. The first group struggles in vain against the creative current of our intellectual tradition. The second group is borne by that current, swelled by new forces, into a world where reason and justice shall permanently prevail. SAMUEL SILLEN.



Paul Michaels

# NEW MASSES

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## Military Communique

ITALIAN reverses in the campaign against Greece are now openly acknowledged in Rome. Mussolini himself, in his speech two weeks ago, admitted that the invasion "had only begun," and might take anywhere "from two to twelve months." With the fall of Koritza, the strategic Italian base, the Greeks are carrying the fight into Albania. While their resistance has been impressive, Athens has already issued an appeal for aid without which continued resistance, much less an offensive to the Adriatic Sea, could hardly be successful. The Italian staff seems to have blundered badly judging from Italian newspaper comments and the appointment of General Ubaldo Soddu to the high command. But even more revealing are the reports from Athens that Italian prisoners have been singing "*Bandera Rossa*," that great anthem of the Italian working class. This is probably what Mussolini means by "a certain universalistic pacifism" in the Italian army. If such reports are true, and if one can generalize from them, they are by far the most important news of the month-old-war.

The world has been given a glimpse of Mussolini's feet of clay, and perhaps an insight into the true war-weariness of the Italian people, all of which might prove decisive later on. But Greece is obviously of such importance in the imperialist struggle for the Near East that the Axis could not give it up without a contest. And while blitzkriegs are unlikely in the difficult Greek terrain, the weight of numbers and superiority in the air would count heavily, if, as seems probable, Hitler comes to Mussolini's aid.

## German Strategy

MEANWHILE German imperialism has completed at least one phase of its wide diplomatic maneuvers, the inclusion of Hungary, Rumania, and Slovakia in the triple alliance. Karl Marx observed that history repeats itself—once as a tragedy, twice as a farce. The Anglo-French new order in Europe, built on the Versailles treaty, ended in tragedy; now the German new order begins as a farce, for Hungary, and especially Rumania and Slovakia, are not exactly world-shaking powers. The Germans are signing their treaties of peace before they have won the war, but it is clear that these ceremonies must be considered preparatory

either to a renewed peace offensive against Great Britain, or more likely, a renewed campaign across Gibraltar into western Africa and through Greece toward Syria and Suez.

But the campaign against Suez must take one of two routes: either via the Dardanelles and, with or without Turkish cooperation, to Syria; or else through Greece and its valuable air and naval bases, and then by way of a naval campaign to Syria and then Palestine. The first alternative bucks up against Turkey, which last week declared martial law around the Dardanelles and warned Bulgaria sharply against cooperation with Germany. It would seem that with the return of Franz Von Papen to his ambassadorial post Hitler has again made offers for Turkish cooperation. On the other hand, German pressure upon Bulgaria is also an indirect form of pressure on the Turks. This line of approach has further dangers: for no matter how the Bulgarian King Boris and his satellites may feel, Bulgaria is Dimitroff's home land; it is here that the working-class movement is stronger than anywhere else in the Balkans and it has strong ties with the peasantry. It seems clear now, especially after the news that Berlin has given up the thought of a Bulgarian adherence to the triple alliance, that if the Germans intend to come to Mussolini's support in Greece, they must do so through the Vardar river valley of Yugoslavia. Even then it's a long way to Suez.

The statement by *Tass* specifically refuting the allegation of the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* to the effect that the Soviet Union had collaborated in Hungary's adherence to the fascist alliance throws considerable light on Molotov's recent conversations in Berlin. Once again, as *NEW MASSES* has continually emphasized, the full independence and power of the Soviet Union in European affairs emerges unmistakably. If, in fact, Germany has given up every thought of a troop passage through Bulgaria, or even new diplomatic ties between Bulgaria and its puppet powers, it would mean that the USSR has been successful in keeping the war as far as possible from its own frontiers, especially the Dardanelles gateway to the Black Sea.

## Roosevelt, Petain, Franco

IT IS clear that none of Germany's objectives in Africa or the Near East can be achieved without French and Spanish support. But we know relatively little of the outcome in the discussions with Franco and Petain. The Vichy government seems to have rejected outright cooperation except at the price of returning to Paris as its capital, as well as other concessions; at this stage of the game, the Germans do not wish to employ the last resort of the conqueror, that is, force, and their precise relations with Vichy remain unclear. Meanwhile Franco has reoccupied Tangiers, the international city opposite Gibraltar, which would imply an Axis offensive against northwest Africa. But Franco is reluctant to join the war, especially since his internal position is precarious.

These uncertainties in France and Spain, whether real or apparent, have inspired the British Foreign Office and the American State Department to try a diplomatic offensive of their own. This explains why an American warship hovers so tenderly around the French island of Martinique in the Caribbean, why credit restrictions for Vichy have been relaxed. This also explains the dispatch of Rear Admiral William Leahy to fill the post as ambassador to France which William Bullitt recently resigned. It certainly makes quite a spectacle: the great democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt palsy-walsy with Marshal Petain!

Even more significant is the story by T. J. Hamilton in the *New York Times* for November 13 that the British are dangling a two-million-pound credit before Franco's eyes. And on top of that comes the report that the State Department is playing the identical role with an offer of 1,000,000 tons of wheat to Spain. None of this has anything to do with humanitarian regard for the Spanish people of course; it is another round in the same game which ended so disastrously with Mussolini last June. If the United States feels such a regard for the people of Spain, whom the Roosevelt embargo knifed in the back, it might protest the daily murders of republicans which happen in Franco's land, or use its diplomatic weight to free some of the million prisoners in Franco dungeons, before food is sent to Spain. And the food itself ought to be placed in the hands of some impartial body such as the American Friends Service Committee. Even more, the State Department might assist the American Rescue Ship Mission, which the United Spanish Aid Committee has organized to bring Spanish and other refugees across from France. No matter how much they need bread, this is what the Spanish people themselves would demand.

## Crisis in Britain

THE fierce German air assault upon Britain continues, evidently unhampered by the continued Royal Air Force attack on German railroad and industrial centers. Coventry's plants may not have been directly hit, but the general devastation has undermined its productive vitality. The same seems to be happening in Birmingham, Southampton, and other key British cities. The surest sign of how difficult things must be in Britain is the growing acknowledgment in the American press of the heavy British censorship. Raymond Daniell, in the *Times* for November 25, publishes a dispatch about British difficulties, which, if it is not deliberately intended to create opinion for larger scale assistance to Britain, certainly paints a black picture. Two contradictory phenomena have recently developed in England: first, the increased pressure upon the United States for loans, materials, and perhaps entry into the war, symbolized by Lord Lothian's remarks on his arrival here; second, the renewed propaganda of those circles in the

British ruling class which seek a basis for truce with Germany. Chamberlain's demise became the convenient occasion for this sentiment to come to the surface. For example, Sir Neville Henderson, former British ambassador in Berlin, who earlier in the week defended the Munich pact, expressed the position of his group with classical candor when he said: "You will not get settled conditions in western Europe until the Germans and the British can work together. We are ready to do it. The trouble is that Germany has to be taught somehow."

It would be too much to say that this group is gaining ground. But it is fighting hard, just as its American counterparts, Joseph Kennedy, Charles Lindbergh, Herbert Hoover, and others, are working hard over here. On the other hand, the Churchill group, with the shameful servility of the Labor officialdom, relies upon bringing the full weight of American imperialism into play.

Against both these trends, it is encouraging to observe the independent political activity of the British people which is growing in England. Now comes the call for a Peoples' Convention which will convene in Manchester on Jan. 12, 1941 backed by 500 prominent figures, among them the Dean of Canterbury, Arthur Horner of the South Wales Miners Federation, D. N. Pritt, and R. Palme Dutt. This call criticizes the war government, its policies toward India, its lack of an air-raid shelter program, its do-nothing attitude toward profiteering, and the rising cost of living. It demands a change of attitude in these respects, calls for friendship with the Soviet Union, and projects a peoples' government in Britain capable of bringing a peoples' peace.

### Uruguay and Bases

THE political crisis in Uruguay gives evidence that no government in Latin America can cooperate with the United States without raising the most explosive issues. Out of their deep experience, the Latin-American peoples are hostile to American imperialism: it is from them that we can learn the true meaning of the administration's "pan-American" program. Last summer, Uruguay staged some highly publicized "fifth column" investigations, and presumably the German menace was scotched. But the opposition to every kind of imperialism runs very deep. The Uruguayan Senate has refused to sanction the proposal that the United States be permitted to construct naval and air bases in the River Plate basin. This is a strategic area, dominating most of Argentina, Paraguay, and southern Brazil. A good deal of the Senate's recalcitrance is demagogic; it so happens that by a political custom, the opposition party, known as the *Herreristas*, control 50 percent of the senatorial seats, and they are using this issue to embarrass the government of President Alfredo Baldomir. Nevertheless the violence of the controversy reflects a much deeper source. It is the suspicion of the population that

## Special Delivery to the Attorney General

DEAR MR. JACKSON: One week ago NEW MASSES addressed an open letter to you concerning an article written by three of your assistants, Francis Hoague, Russell M. Brown, and Philip Marcus, and published in the November issue of the *Harvard Law Review*. This article, entitled "Wartime Conscription and Control of Labor," is a detailed blueprint for the conscription of labor under dictatorial "work or fight" orders. Its far-reaching proposals include the abrogation of union contracts, the wiping out of social legislation, and even the repeal of laws requiring children to attend school. NEW MASSES pointed out that all this was in clear violation of the Constitution and of the pre-election pledges of President Roosevelt. We asked whether you and the administration stand behind the design for fascism executed by your assistants. To us it was clear that these three gentlemen—whose article was published without any mention of their connection with the Department of Justice—were speaking not only for themselves. Your silence concerning the issues raised by NEW MASSES, your failure even formally to dissociate yourself and the administration from the proposals of Messrs. Hoague, Brown, and Marcus indicates that we were right in this assumption.

But you have not been altogether silent. A statement you issued on another matter confirms the grave implications of the *Harvard Law Review* article. Your charge that the Vultee strike was caused and is being prolonged by Communists has unmasked the real character of the administration's program. You have taken sides with the profiteering, anti-union corporations who want to declare it a crime for a worker to demand a wage higher than \$20 a week. You have sought to smear legitimate trade unionism after the fashion of Martin Dies and William Randolph Hearst—and for the same ends. From this to the outlawing of strikes in war industries, as suggested by certain tory congressmen, and the conscription of labor and the entire population, as proposed by your three assistants, is merely a matter of time and expediency. The "limited emergency" declared by President Roosevelt over a year ago can easily be converted into an unlimited emergency, and, in the words of your three bright young men, "slight notice is given to constitutional technicalities in time of stress."

We repeat our charge that the Roosevelt administration, with the support of the Republican "loyal opposition," is conspiring to destroy American democracy. Under the pretense of opposing fascism it is preparing for the American people the same fate as the German and Italian peoples have suffered. The alarm must be sounded. The recent CIO and Farmers Union conventions show that neither labor nor the farmers have any desire to put their necks in the halter. But this sentiment needs to be combined with greater awareness of the vistas of horror the government is opening before all of us. Were the contents of this article by your three assistants known to millions, your seat in Washington, Mr. Jackson, would be very warm indeed, and Congress would be delayed by such protests that it would be compelled to act to prevent this crime. NEW MASSES intends to do everything it can to make known the truth and make strong the arm of those who fight war and tyranny.

THE EDITORS.

once American marines were lodged on their soil, it would be a decade before they were gone. Even the presence of an American warship, sent down there last summer, does not seem to have had the desired effect. The State Department fully realizes that this issue might be the test case of its entire program, for it intends to secure bases in every nation which fronts on the Atlantic or the Pacific. Sumner Welles has several times reiterated that the United States seeks no change of sovereignty, and wishes to share the use of these bases with all powers, but the people think this a mockery, since the United States is the only power with a sizable force.

This same issue comes to the surface in the projected visit of Getulio Vargas, President of Brazil, to the United States. And it is one of the things that will decide the Chilean elections next March. It is something for Vice-President elect Henry Wallace to worry about when he visits Mexico City next week.

### Communist Decision

THE Communist Party has voted at a special convention to sever its organizational affiliation with the Communist International. This has been made necessary by the passage of the Voorhis act which provides that organizations having any connections with bodies outside the United States must register with the government and turn over membership lists and other information.

The Voorhis act is a direct product of the anti-democratic activities of the Dies committee; its sponsor was, in fact, the "liberal" member of that committee, Rep. Jerry Voorhis of California. The provisions of the act are so broad that they could be applied, at the discretion of the attorney general, to the AFL (though, curiously enough, not to the CIO as a whole), the YMCA, the Zionist Organization of America, the American Legion, the Socialist Party, the Amateur Athletic

Union, Rotary, Kiwanis, the Masons, and a host of other groups. This is a startling perspective. But, as Earl Browder pointed out in a speech to the convention: "Such complete imitation of Hitlerism is not practical for the moment; that is only 'the poetry of the future.'"

That this law marks a sharp break with basic democratic practice is patent even on the most cursory examination. It is tantamount to establishing a legalized blacklist such as has been the dream of open-shop corporations for years. And it outlaws that internationalism which Jefferson, Tom Paine, and Abraham Lincoln upheld as integral to the democratic national spirit of America. To this internationalism in its modern proletarian form, to the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, the Communist convention reaffirmed its loyalty. Browder quoted the words of Lincoln: "The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relationship, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations and tongues and kindreds."

Inured as we are to the cowardly abandonment of liberalism by certain liberals under pressure of the drive toward war and fascism, there was, nevertheless, something especially shocking in the *New Republic's* editorial on the action of the Communist convention. It might have been written by Martin Dies himself. Under the title "The Communist Subterfuge," the editorial heaps abuse on the Communist Party for protecting its members from victimization. It urges the government not to be "deceived." The entire editorial is thinly veiled incitement to the suppression of a working-class party which has been in the forefront of the democratic struggle. Do the editors of the *New Republic* hope to win a pat on the back merely because they are on their hands and knees? Are they certain that somewhere in the past they have not themselves been contaminated by association with Communists or those whom Dies and Hoover may please to call Communists? And are they sure that the axe which they are helping whet for the Communists may not fall on their own virtuous heads?

## The Farmers Meet

Two great national organizations of farmers met in convention last week in the deep shadow of the long-continued American agrarian crisis. At Syracuse, the National Grange, which is under conservative leadership, held its annual sessions. The Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union, most progressive of farm organizations, held its thirty-sixth annual convention in Denver, where representatives of 130,000 share-croppers, tenant farmers, and small growers urged Congress to grant relief to debt-ridden farms, protection against foreclosure of family sized farms, a loan plan like HOLC which would enable tenants to buy the land they work. The Grange convention, at the prompting of the wealthier farmers, urged amendment to the Wagner act to exempt farm workers from NLRA protection.

The Grange would send "all aid to Britain," and favored conscription, while the Union faced away from foreign entanglements. Warning that war would totally disrupt farm economy, a resolution adopted in Denver said in part: "We, as responsible leaders in the farm community, recognize that the only defense against totalitarian dictatorship is total preparedness for democracy by achieving and maintaining the health, well-being, and freedom of every one of our fellow-citizens." In line with this policy, the Union reaffirmed the identity of its political interests with labor. Although James G. Patton of Denver, backed by pro-Roosevelt forces, was elected president, the convention adopted a clear resolution for peace and urged farmer support of labor candidates for political office.

## Mr. Dies' Real Motives

THE Dies committee has thrown the spotlight on the activities of Nazi agents in this country. The specific revelations, which were preceded by a considerable build-up, are, as various newspapers have observed, enormously unimpressive. A family quarrel between the Dies committee and the Department of Justice reveals that the FBI has for a long time been working on these cases and that the committee's publicity has jeopardized the FBI investigations.

Martin Dies' sudden concern with Nazi activities is motivated by something other than a desire to protect the American people from the operations of foreign agents. The most important Gestapo men find no difficulty in eluding the crude passes made at them by the Diesmen; and American business men like Henry Ford, who have close relations with the Nazis, and outright fascists like Coughlin and Pelley know that Martin Dies is their friend and will look the other way. It is significant, too, that the Dies committee shows no similar interest in the activities of British agents. The operations of the British are probably far more extensive than those of the Nazis since they have official sanction and support in high places.

The real objective of this fanfare about Nazi espionage has been unwittingly revealed by an editorial commenting on the Dies exposures in the November 23 issue of the *New York Herald Tribune*. This Republican supporter of the Roosevelt foreign policy wonders whether the presence in this country of Nazi diplomats "is not too great a price to pay for our technical neutrality." And it asks whether "we would not be better off should we declare war against our obvious enemies and thus rid ourselves of all their conniving representatives." What the Dies committee is doing is attempting to prepare the ground for a break in diplomatic relations with Germany, and America's entry into the war on the side of Britain. It is in furtherance of this war program that Dies announced that "pro-Communist" organizations in eight cities would likewise be raided. This was two days after his agents had served a subpoena on the Chicago Council of the

American Peace Mobilization. Obviously, "pro-Communist" for Dies, as for the administration, is synonymous with pro-peace.

## Labor Stirs

As "national defense" is translated into increased production of war materials, prices rise, profits soar—and wages remain on the same low levels. It is not surprising then that workers in war industries are becoming restive, and that strikes are spreading. To offset this tendency, employers, masking their real intentions behind a self-expressed declaration of patriotic necessity, are moving cautiously toward a demand for the outlawing of strikes.

In Downey, a suburb of Los Angeles, workers of the Vultee Airplane Corp. last week won an increase in minimum wages from 50 cents to 62½ cents an hour. The company insisted upon a no-strike clause in the two-year contract; representatives of the United Automobile Workers, CIO, now engaged in a national organization campaign in aircraft, replied that no such clause was necessary if the company intended to carry out terms of the contract. The War Department sent a uniformed mediator to Downey—he promptly got drunk. The Department of Labor rushed a substitute. The Department of Justice blasted the strikers with Attorney General Jackson's statement that the strike was inspired, led, and prolonged by Communists. Wyndham Mortimer, representing the workers, replied that Mr. Jackson apparently meant that anyone dissatisfied with \$20 a week pay was a Red. Whereupon Martin Dies rushed upon the scene to supplement Jackson with wild charges that the leaders of the Vultee strike are Communists engaged in a plot against national defense.

Aluminum workers at Kensington, Pa., walked out when their Mellon-owned company refused to fire a knife-wielding stool pigeon. Back of their demand is dissatisfaction with the Hillman dictate of last summer whereby they accepted a 2-cent an hour wage increase in lieu of their demand for a 10-cent rise. Crucible Steel workers also struck recently. And the failure of Bethlehem Steel, which has received \$1,000,000,000 worth of war orders, to obey the NLRA may result in a widening strike area.

Employers would like to see some up-and-coming congressman like Georgia's Mr. Cox, who calls the Vultee strike "treason," introduce legislation outlawing walkouts. According to columnist David Lawrence, bellwether of the "boys in the know," this is obviously impossible now. Instead, the idea is to soften labor opposition by extending and amplifying the terms of the Railway Labor Dispute Act to the "defense" industries. This law compels a 90-day pause between the filing of labor demands and strike action. This Hillman type of mediation is a necessary feature of the scheme to stall, avert, and dissipate union plans. Thus the administration follows the Daladier pattern, attacking labor while an unwilling nation is urged to war.

# The Dividends of Red-baiting

A review of George Seldes' important book on the leading figures and organizations behind the Red-baiting racket. . . . John Stuart discusses Leo Huberman's "America, Incorporated."

WITCH HUNT: THE TECHNIQUE AND PROFITS OF RED-BAITING, by George Seldes. Modern Age Books. \$2.75.

"AS A WAR correspondent and one who covered Versailles," writes George Seldes, "I saw the beginnings of what is today the great game of Red-baiting. . . ." He refers, of course, to the international campaign that began in 1917 for the purpose of crushing the young Soviet Republic. His experiences and observations in both Europe and America eminently qualify him as an expert on the witch hunt.

The Red-baiting drive in this country, especially in the recent period, does not consist of isolated cases. It has followed a pattern, culminating in the most concentrated campaign ever conducted. The facts behind this drive and their meaning concern Seldes in this book. He is a hard hitter, naming names and calling a spade just that. In the pages of *Witch Hunt* are paraded the leading figures—Dies, Matthews, Father Coughlin, Woll, and lesser lights; also the chambers of commerce, manufacturers, rich farmers' associations, and similar groups. Seldes calls the turn on the corporate and financial interests who profit most by Red-baiting.

Also recorded are the doings of George Sokolsky, Ralph Easley, Mayor Hague, and the congressional and professional witch hunters. The record of the anti-labor tear gas firms and labor spies is laid bare. As the La Follette committee hearings clearly disclosed, the espionage and munition firms advertise themselves as "patriots," interested only in "stamping out Communism." But La Follette's prodding forced their agents to admit that they engaged in and provoked violence and strife for the purpose of crushing unions, be they AFL or CIO. This point is one of the most important brought out by Seldes, because it shows so clearly how Red-baiting is a mask for smashing the labor movement as a whole. We learn also that the recent murder of Laura Law, wife of a militant lumber union official in Oregon, had its origin in the "anti-Red" campaign of local newspapers and business men.

"Red-baiting," Seldes writes . . . "pays in dollars and cents." The biggest witch hunters in this country are the "purely commercial organizations, who Red-bait to preserve their wealth, the system which makes their holdings secure, the status quo of Big Money." Red-baiting is thus not only a powerful weapon of big business, but has itself become a profitable business racket.

It is ironical that the President, in his New Deal hey-day a target of Red-baiters, has now gone over to the enemy. "Gone over" is per-

haps too mild, since Roosevelt himself is now a spearhead of Red-baiting, a weapon which, Seldes recalls, "helped Hitler take power." Seldes cites authoritative sources to show that the current drive of G-men against "Reds" does not originate with J. Edgar Hoover, as some have thought, but with the President himself. He also reveals how the onetime liberal Attorney General Frank Murphy, with an eye to the Supreme Court, entered on a witch hunt against Detroit citizens who sympathized with the Spanish loyalist government. The chapter on "Who Are the Real Fifth Column?" is a notable one. The author qualifies as a real expert on this subject. For, if I recall rightly, Seldes was the first one to popularize the term fifth column in this country in a memorable article in the old *Fight* magazine.

"Most Red-baiting," the author tells us, "does not consist of the baiting of Reds." It may begin, or appear to be directed, against Communists. Actually, it is aimed at the labor movement, liberals, progressive organizations of all kinds, including Negro and youth groups. Nor are advocates of such non-fundamental programs as municipal ownership, "good government," or cooperatives immune. Red-baiting, in short, is used against all who organize in order to curb the profits of the Red-baiters and their backers. It is the tactic of those forces that are working toward fascism.

This book has important lessons for America in these critical days. Mr. Seldes is among those who today see clearly how Red-baiting

leads to fascism. The people are in his debt for giving them such excellent ammunition with which to combat their Red-baiting enemies.

HY KRAVIF.

## Monopoly and Politics

AMERICA, INCORPORATED, by Leo Huberman. Viking Press. \$2.75.

THERE has always been an engaging simplicity in Mr. Huberman's work. He brings a fresh technique of presenting concepts worked out by others; and in that sense his writing is mainly derivative. His *Man's Worldly Goods* is among the best popular studies of the development of capitalism and the corollary economic ideas which were born in the course of the system's ascent and decline. His excessive caution makes it difficult to identify him with any special school of economic thought but undoubtedly he has borrowed most heavily from the Marxists.

This new book is an overall view of the growth of American monopoly after the Civil War. It is decidedly elementary in its approach, using data that have been explored many times before. Its chief quality is that it defies the academicians by talking plainly and directly, by citing statistical material where words would obscure the trend of capital accumulation. By humanizing the facts in terms of what the politicians were saying and thinking, Huberman is able to find the appropriate quotation to illuminate a point. For example, in the McKinley era, monopoly's rapid conquest of the domestic market required new outlets for the consumption of factory production. Imperialist politics began to dominate the scene and to show how Congress was echoing the needs of the industrialists Huberman quotes Sen. Albert Beveridge, who rarely enunciated the scripture of aggrandizement without heavenly sanction. It is worth repeating here, particularly because it is a significant motif in White House speeches and in the literary lamentations of Archibald MacLeish.

God . . . has made us the master organizers of the world to establish system where chaos reigns. . . . He has made us adepts in government that we may administer government among savages and senile peoples. Pray God that the time may never come when Mammon and the love of ease shall so debase our blood that we will fear to shed it for the flag and its imperial destiny. . . . Our institutions will follow our flag on the wings of our commerce. And American law, American order, American civilization, and the American flag will plant themselves on shores hitherto bloody and benighted, but by those agencies of God henceforth to be made beautiful and bright.



George Seldes

The first half of the book can be summed up as the saga of the country's climb "from rags to riches," as Huberman puts it; tremendous industrial and financial expansion under the aegis of the all-embracing corporation. With the flowering of imperialism, national interests in terms of developing the country no longer ran parallel to those of the industrial capitalists whose rate of profit could be maintained and enlarged only by colonial adventure. Concentration of capital expressing itself in unprecedented trustification was a sign along the road leading to Mr. Wilson's war. This is among the major points Huberman elaborates as the story unfolds. There are also good critical summaries of the labor movement, its origins, and the special forms it took as defensive tactics against the monopolies. The farmers' plight is well sketched against the background of struggle with the railroads, the Eastern bankers, the hopeless money panaceas held up to them by the mercurial Bryan.

This first half, it seems to me, is more satisfactory as economic history than that which follows—the tale of the New Deal. What Huberman has to say about Mr. Roosevelt's administration is sprightly as well as useful. But it is for the most part a cataloging of New Deal legislation that rolled out of the congressional sessions. I felt keenly the absence of an analytical summary of Mr. Roosevelt's eclectic economic philosophy, the relation of his ideas to that of his antecedents in office. In the matter of foreign policy Mr. Roosevelt hardly differs from Mr. Hoover. True there are some minor exceptions. There was the all too brief moment of "good neighbor" intentions toward Latin America. But here, as late as last winter, when Huberman was completing his book, it was more than apparent that in the good neighbor days Mr. Roosevelt was covering the old imperialist fist with a velvet glove. It is also a little silly to say, as Huberman does, that while the New Deal was not a revolution in economics it was a "revolution in ideas." The credit system was kept from collapsing by the administration's assistance to the largest financial institutions. Devaluation of the dollar in the first phases of the New Deal made only small inroads in the debt burden of farmers and middle classes. The crop reduction program was hardly a revolutionary idea; it was picked directly from Herbert Hoover's pocket. The only people who really thought that Mr. Roosevelt held revolutionary ideas during the progressive stage of his administration were members of the Liberty League. Whatever major shifts took place in political outlook from 1934-38 can only be attributed to an aroused labor movement, to a political regeneration among the masses of people such as this country had never experienced before. The best of the New Deal ideas were, in the last analysis, based on tactical compromises with the biggest agricultural and financial groupings.

I could wish also that Huberman's last chapter peroration were more definitive. A whole bill of particulars should have been included to substantiate, certainly for the many who still doubt it, his conclusion that the

Democrats are as different from the Republicans as two peas in a pod. It would have given more substance and strength to his sound contention that each of the parties "believes in the protection and advancement of American imperialist interests abroad," and that "neither the Democrats nor the Republicans can give anything but the prologue to war." And while Huberman unfortunately avoids linking himself to a programmatic solution against the fast descending darkness, his book is finely wrought evidence that "America is suffering from only one disease—capitalism."

JOHN STUART.

## Discrimination

A COLORED WOMAN IN A WHITE WORLD, by Mary Church Terrell. Randsell, Inc., Washington, D. C. \$2.50.

THIS book should be required reading for all those who still stubbornly maintain that "there is no special Negro question in the United States; there is only a class question; the problems of the Negro people are simply the problems of all who work."

Take the case of Mrs. Terrell. Her autobiography is 427 pages of evidence of the national oppression of the American Negro people. For Mrs. Terrell has enjoyed a degree of financial ease and security which very few white people ever attain. There was no difficulty about a college education; nor about post-graduate study in Switzerland, Germany, France, and Italy; nor about frequent trips to England and the continent in later years. Mrs. Terrell has lived a life singularly removed from the masses of working people, black and white; her story is filled with references to her friends among senators and congressmen, lords and ladies, princes, countesses, kings.

And yet—this well-to-do, well-educated, and somewhat aristocratic woman has been dragged from her seat in trains, buses, street cars; has been insulted and manhandled by conductors; has been barred from theaters, concerts, restaurants, hotels. She has been "ghettoed" in Washington, denied the chance to buy a desirable home because it was in a "white" neighborhood. She has been unable to get employment as a clerical worker in department stores, offices, government bureaus—despite her college degree, her wide experience, her knowledge of many languages—simply because she is a Negro. And when she happened to get a job because of her light complexion she was dismissed as soon as the "error" was discovered.

She has suffered also for discrimination visited upon family and friends. One close friend was lynched because he was "too successful." Her husband, a judge of the municipal court in Washington, was subjected every four years to ferocious attacks by those who wanted to remove a colored official. (One newspaper cartooned him as an ape.) A young girl, a friend of the family, was shut out from half a dozen Northern academies, and the registrars were astonishingly frank about the reason. Jim

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The Daily and Sunday Worker wish to announce that we have changed the price of the Daily Worker from 3 cents to 5 cents. The price of the Sunday Worker will remain the same. This decision is made necessary by the political developments of the past year.

During the last 16 years of American life the Daily Worker has established an unparalleled record of uncompromising struggle for the needs of the working class and of the American people. The task has not been easy. Every year we have been able to meet our deficit only with the financial help and support of our readers, plus our limited advertising revenue.

Today the situation has changed. Our readers support us more strongly than ever, but our advertisers, yielding to the pressure of the warmongers and reactionaries, are becoming fewer than ever. In a crisis, when the interests of the people reach a sharp clash with those of Wall Street, the big advertisers take their place beside Wall Street.

This is a boycott against our policy—against the policy of fighting for the peace, security and liberties of labor and the American people. Our income, always extremely limited from advertising sources, inevitably suffers more.

It is apparent that our advertising income in 1940 will be at least \$35,000 below the previous year. But that lost income must be found elsewhere, if the Daily and Sunday Worker are to be able to meet the increasing responsibilities of swiftly moving events.

The same war drive which has caused the defection of our advertisers, makes it necessary for us to depend more and more upon our own resources for accurate and reliable news. We are featuring more exclusive foreign cables. Wired news from all major cities, necessary long distance phone calls, expenses which accumulate in the upkeep of our technical equipment—all these impose increased financial burdens.

The increased devotion of our readers, the influence which we wield on national life and politics, cannot be measured by the ledger. It is our policy to fight for the interests of the working class and the entire American people. That policy is our very being.

Therefore we ask all to support us in this price change. We ask you not to rest content with your personal support, but to help us make this a great mass newspaper, a paper which goes into America's homes and farms, its mines and mills.

Let us make this price change the signal for an unprecedented rise in the circulation of the Daily and Sunday Worker! On our part, we pledge to continue our efforts to make the Daily-Sunday Worker even more powerful in providing bold and uncompromising leadership in the struggle for peace, security and freedom. We ask that you give us that bold and uncompromising support that will bring this leadership to the masses of workers and common people of our country.

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Crowism, carried by fellow Americans, followed her even to France and Germany. Her book is replete with such stories, which she characterizes vividly as "cases of assault and battery committed upon the feelings and self-respect of colored people."

Mrs. Terrell's life has been full and active. She was a founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; she was a prominent figure in the woman suffrage movement; she was the first president of the National Association of Colored Women; she was a member of the Board of Education of Washington, D. C. Therefore, her occasional compromises with Jim Crowism—which she does not even seem to recognize as compromises—are the more surprising. To mention only two examples out of many: "If colored people could find houses," she writes, "on a street restricted to themselves, which were as well built as those in white districts, they would make no effort to thrust themselves upon their fair-skinned brothers and sisters." Why this acceptance of segregation? And again, in protesting the substitution of white for Negro troops in Europe after the World War, she wrote to Premier Poincare: "... if for good and sufficient reasons it was deemed wise to draw the line between white and black soldiers, the interest of ... brave, black soldiers would have been better conserved if that fact had not been broadcast throughout the world." Thus, she advocated, at least in this case, that discrimination, if it must be at all, would be better accomplished quietly instead of in the open.

The author's description of systematic, unashamed Jim Crowism in the national capital, including government buildings and departments, is an important part of the book, revealing as it does the complicity of federal administrations in oppression of the Negro.

ELIZABETH LAWSON.

## News from Sing-Sing

MEET THE MURDERER, by Warden Lewis E. Lawes. Harper & Bros. New York. \$3.

THE enlightened warden of Sing-Sing tears down the commonplace delusions about the unregeneracy of that arch-offender, the killer. Not only is the ordinary murderer usually a first offender; given a chance, he will usually make every effort to redress a crime committed in some fit of uncontrolled temper or fear.

Warden Lawes complains that too frequently judges and juries arrive at summary verdicts, sentencing to the "hot seat" men of essentially high character while others of long criminal record, more thoroughly familiar with the law's loop holes, manage to elude the chair. One of the most gruesome pages in the book is a nightmarish description of the execution of a seventeen-year-old boy.

Lawes opposes capital punishment and obviously intends that this book, for all its trappings of pulpy melodrama, shall strengthen the case against it. Not only does capital pun-

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ishment fail to deter a murderer, according to Lawes; it not infrequently deprives innocent individuals—or at least individuals whose guilt still remains to be fully proved—of their lives. It is altogether possible, according to him, given our present legal structure, for an innocent person to find himself in the electric chair.

The coincidence of murder with impoverished circumstances, lack of work, and education, recurs over and over in the book. May there not be some tie-up, Mr. Lawes?

The book leaves one gasping not so much at the brutality of the common murderer as at the cold-blooded sadism of the state. The state, formerly having done little or nothing to aid the individual in solving his problems before the crime was finally committed, now becomes jealously mindful of its vested right to torture and put to death its hapless prey without excessive concern for his possible innocence. Nor is the state concerned over the fact that the entire proceeding may represent a grotesque waste of money, time, and effort as far as preventing future murders is concerned.

To those still unconvinced that our legal and penal systems are essentially medieval, Mr. Lawes' book is bound to prove wholesomely disturbing. It would have proved more provocative had he looked into the Soviet Union's penal system for the answers to the questions which he poses.

ED FALKOWSKI.

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## Shoe Industry

SHOES: THE WORKERS AND THE INDUSTRY, by Horace B. Davis. International Publishers. \$1.50.

MORE than a decade ago Labor Research Association embarked on a series of studies of industries, their economic and labor policies, and labor's tasks in relation to them. This series is now continued in Horace B. Davis' timely and realistic presentation of the problems confronting workers in the shoe and leather industries. The author traces the familiar pattern of industrial planlessness, inefficiency, and cutthroat competition together with monopolistic practices. He analyzes the peculiar factors which have made possible highly mobile small-scale enterprises, teetering on the verge of bankruptcy and surviving largely through ruthless wage cutting, union-wrecking, and migrations to regions which offer safeguards, however temporary, for anti-union policies. The consequent plight of the shoe and leather workers uprooted periodically by runaway shops, victimized by seasonal and technological unemployment, living on the fringe of destitution, is fully documented. Mr. Davis appraises the strength of the CIO unions in the field and the problems of organizing the industry, and indicates the need for intensive effort if the shoe workers are to be united to cope with overt open-shop movements and the more subtle forms of paternalism which are now a constant challenge. The effectiveness of the book would have been enhanced

## A. B. MAGIL

A *New Masses* editor who is an outstanding interpreter of world events. He first exposed Father Coughlin back in 1934-35, and his two pamphlets, *The Truth About Father Coughlin* and *The Real Father Coughlin*, sold more than 300,000 copies. He is co-author of the book, *The Peril of Fascism: The Crisis of American Democracy*, considered the most comprehensive study of fascist tendencies in the United States. His recent *New Masses* articles on the Roosevelt administration and on Stalin evoked widespread comment. Mr. Magil is available for lecture dates.

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had the stark statistics been supplemented and dramatized by material drawn from the personal experiences of workers who have known these problems at first hand.

CHARLOTTE TODES.

### Books in Brief

**GUILTY MEN**, by "Cato." Frederick A. Stokes Company. \$1.50.

This book has been a best seller in England in spite of attempts to ban it. It is a bitter indictment of the fifteen leading practitioners of British official incompetence and treachery over the last ten years. It records the efforts of Sir Samuel Hoare to provide Germany with a navy and Italy with Abyssinia, the refusal of Baldwin and Chamberlain to rearm, and their frequent insistence that British power had reached "terrifying" proportions. It tells the dirty story of September 1938—"I bring you Peace with Honor." It shows the efficient working of the Tory machine under the boss-rule of Chamberlain, David Margesson, and Kingsley Wood, and the bungling efforts of their appointees, Inskip, Burgin, Stanhope, et al, to prepare the country for war.

The indictment is sharp as far as it goes, but it goes no deeper than the personalities and perversities of a cabal. Nothing is said of the forces of British business which made possible such a cabal and kept it in power. This book has no quarrel with imperialism, only with its mistakes, and it ends on a note of satisfaction that Churchill is at last in command.

**THE FIELDS OF PARADISE**, by Ralph Bates. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$2.50.

The new novel by Ralph Bates is a slight achievement. Concerned with the rebellion of the peasants of San Lorenzo in Mexico, against their local *caciques*, the narrative fails to illuminate its context more than superficially. No character in the book achieves three-dimensional life, and the mystical undertones and overtones which were evident in Bates' earlier work have here become more prominent. Both as fiction and as exposition of its really vital material, the book is negative.

**SHAKESPEARE AND OTHER MASTERS**, by Elmer Edgar Stoll. Harvard University Press. \$4.50.

The bulk of this book is a study of characteristics of Shakespeare's art, and comparisons between Shakespeare's achievements and those of other masters, principally the Greek and French classic writers. This material is introduced by an essay on the critic as sleuth, in which Professor Stoll gently ridicules attempts of the critic to carry on investigations beyond the text before him. And the book concludes with an essay called "The Tragic Fallacy" which is a critique of Mr. Krutch's "Modern Temper" and its rejection of the life of our time as a source for epic reflection in literature. In these two essays Mr. Stoll, in effect, speaks for a limitation of criticism to purely esthetic data, and to an assumption of

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the unimportance of literature as social evidence or a social force. So far as Professor Stoll's own criticism is concerned, it proves only that a limited criticism is a limited criticism. Large and interesting areas of his subjects are left untouched. Within his limits Professor Stoll is frequently interesting but the writing is profuse.

DOCUMENTS ON AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS 1939-40,  
edited by S. Shepard Jones and Denys P. Myers  
for the World Peace Foundation. \$3.50.

ANYONE interested in international affairs will find in this volume all the facts, figures, documents of the past year's events, the collection of which would take hours in the libraries and weeks of clipping newspapers. These documents not only concern the development of American policy, but constitute a record of all the important events abroad as they affect the United States. The facts are of course incontestable. But the chapter on the principles of American policy based on the President's speeches, on the important address by A. A. Berle to the Yale Political Union, and similar pronouncements by government spokesmen, tells only a small fraction of the story. It really has to be deciphered. If you know the cipher this volume will provide valuable information.

CAREERS IN AVIATION, by Ben B. Follett. Waverly House. \$2.00.

Mr. Follett, pilot of much experience and inspector for the Civil Aeronautics Authority, has written a short comprehensive book, designed to tell the prospective job hunter in aviation what jobs are open and how to qualify for them. He has duplicated the recent *How to Get into Aviation*, by John B. Walker, at twice the price, but with twice the charm. Mr. Follett seems to have a genuine feeling for flying, would like people to find work in their chosen field; even though a reading of his book will reveal that such positions are few and far between, and cost a fortune. For it is a sad fact that those who enter aviation from this point on, will have to enter (if they do at all) through the gates of the military services.

SINGING VALLEYS, by Dorothy Giles. Random House. \$3.00.

*Singing Valleys* tells the story of corn in American life. As a collection of colorful bits of American history, of Mayan, Aztec, and North American Indian legends in which corn figures, of anecdotes, superstitions, cooking recipes, and Ripleyesque "Things you ought to know about corn," the book has a certain amount of charm. But it also contains a good deal of nonsense: "The battleground is in the soul. . . . It may even be that as a people we shall have to grow up." Despite the expressed belief that the farmer is the backbone of American democracy, Miss Giles has little to say about the real problems of the farmer.

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# Save Luiz Carlos Prestes

## An Open Letter to the President of Brazil

His Excellency Senhor Getulio Vargas  
President of the United States of Brazil  
Palacio do Cattete  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Mr. President:

As Americans, we are deeply concerned with the welfare and progress of our own country as well as of those of all the Americas. We believe that in freedom of thought and opinion lies the basis toward this end. That the infringement upon democratic rights in one country cannot but imperil democracy elsewhere. It is in this spirit that we respectfully appeal to you for the release of Luiz Carlos Prestes, Honorary Chairman of the National Liberation Alliance of Brazil and outstanding leader of the Latin American people.

The contribution of Prestes to justice and liberty in Latin America is recognized and recorded in the history textbooks of many countries. He has won the respect and admiration of all the forward looking people of this Hemisphere.

In the tradition of Bolivar, Toussaint l'Ouverture, Marti, San Martin, O'Higgins, Juarez and Tiradentes, he believed in and worked for the development of democratic institutions and processes in Brazil.

Yet, LUIZ CARLOS PRESTES has languished in a Brazilian prison for the past five years. To add to his torture, Prestes' wife has been deported to Germany where in a concentration camp she gave birth to their daughter, whom Prestes has never seen. His crime was opposition to reaction and to the fascist movement led by Plinio Salgado. Be it noted that Salgado, who organized an abortive coup d'etat against your government in 1937 is enjoying the freedom denied to Prestes.

History has demonstrated that the democratic existence and national sovereignty of a people are essentially dependent on the democratic liberties of all; that the security of a nation is seriously endangered when the democratic unity of its citizens is undermined. We earnestly appeal to you, Mr. President, to grant general amnesty and to restore his freedom to Luiz Carlos Prestes as a symbol of the democratic unity of the Brazilian people and of the peoples of all the Americas against any type of foreign domination. We do so in the firm conviction that his release will serve the cause of democracy and liberty in the Western hemisphere.

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## STATEMENT

Since this appeal was circularized, American press dispatches from Brazil contain the news that Luiz Carlos Prestes has been again brought to trial.

It is clear that Prestes is again the victim of a crude frame-up which has as its purpose the elimination of a fearless fighter for the national liberation of the Brazilian people. Americans who wish to further democracy in the Americas must stop this attempt to kill the great leader of the fight against Brazilian fascism.

Individuals and organizations are urged to wire protests to President Getulio Vargas, Rio de Janeiro and to Mr. Carlos Martins, Brazilian Ambassador to the United States in Washington.

Please send copies of your protests to us. Contributions to aid us in our work will be very much appreciated.

CLIFFORD T. McAVOY, *Chairman*  
Council for Pan American Democracy  
100 Fifth Avenue, New York City

# Mickey Mouse as Concert Master

Walt Disney "has achieved remarkable things" in his new film "Fantasia," says Daniel Todd. A happy union between the animated cartoon and symphonic music.

THE movie critics all liked *Fantasia*, and in this they were right. Walt Disney, in transforming eight pieces of concert-hall music into animated cartoons, has achieved remarkable things, most remarkable of which is an account of the beginning of the world to the music of Igor Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. Stravinsky, who sensibly wants to get a job at the Disney studios, has told the press that this apocalyptic vision represents what he actually had in mind when he wrote the music, and after seeing Disney's impression of the convulsions which seized the earth in its infancy, that does not seem unlikely. When the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra produces one of Stravinsky's dire sounds, formerly accompanied by a leap from a ballet dancer dressed as a faun, Disney gives you a shot of a volcano erupting, followed by an earthquake, a hurricane, and a tidal wave. They seem a lot more suitable.

*Fantasia* is Disney's most elaborate production to date but it is not a new development in his work. The sound track, which appears in person for a few moments in *Fantasia*, is the most carefully worked out part of any Disney picture. He uses music to sharpen bits of action or put across gags, a trick which might be contemplated with profit by other directors, but there is never any doubt that the music is secondary. There is sometimes doubt about it in *Fantasia*. To illustrate Bach's *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor*, Disney takes geometrical shapes and bands of color and runs them across the screen in time to the music. He does this with considerable insight and imagination, but it doesn't add much to the music. The rest of the selections, from purely internal evidence, would seem to have been written for the purpose of accompanying Disney cartoons.

When Disney wrestles with Beethoven he has him down crying Uncle inside of three seconds. This was probably inevitable because, no matter what the price of admission, a movie theater is not a concert hall and the audience's attention is directed towards what is happening on the screen. What is happening during Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* is a picnic on Mt. Olympus during which centaurs and their girls cavort amid clouds of tiny fluttering cherubs. It is an excessively silly Silly Symphony, and a good illustration of the mushy side of Disney's work.

Ever since the first Silly Symphony about ten years ago there have been two tendencies apparent in Disney's pictures. One is currently represented by Donald Duck, a vigorous animal who will stand for no nonsense and who will fight back when confronted with a re-

calcitrant deck chair. No matter what impossible situations Donald finds himself in, he reacts quickly and with an engaging fury. To me he has a highly attractive personality. In pictures starring Donald Duck Disney uses plenty of action, slapstick gags, and contemporary images, carrying on the best traditions of the silent film. In many cases he uses situations which occurred originally to the facile imagination of Mack Sennett. Movie comedy has become restrained since the days of Mack Sennett, and almost no comedy director now has his actors do anything which couldn't have happened, if only to a careless lunatic. I remember seeing a Sennett comedian once get the fright of his life. I was watching him leaning against a hitching post, and the next minute all I saw was a shapeless pile of clothes and the actor was disappearing over the horizon in his underwear. Another time a Sennett heroine in a burning building leaped out of the window and would have been dashed to earth if the hero, a fireman, hadn't caught her and balanced her on the end of the stream of water he was playing from his fire hose. Another gag I remember involved a small shanty on the edge of a river. Its occupants had just decided to move onto a boat for the summer when Harold Lloyd, as a messenger boy, came to deliver a telegram. He rapped on the door, turned his back, put his hands in his pockets and began to whistle. By the time he turned round to rap again a crane had reached down and put the shanty on a barge, and the barge was out in the middle of the river.

Disney has used all these situations. There is almost always a chase in a Donald Duck. Usually there's a fight. Disney's animals are constantly becoming embroiled with machinery, which has always been funny. Neither Charlie Chaplin nor Harold Lloyd nor Buster Keaton nor Harry Langdon was ever able to put up a deck chair, and every strong man in the audience sympathized. Of course Disney never seized the full possibilities of social satire, and he probably never will. There was talk once that he planned to make a picture about Hitler and Mussolini, which might have been as great as *The Great Dictator*. Nothing came of it. I'd like to see Disney do a job on the United States Congress instead of centaurs and cherubs, but there is no point in being visionary.

When Donald Duck or Mickey Mouse becomes sentimental, you know that the wool is being pulled over his eyes by some clever villain, and he will come to regret it. What would have come of the three little pigs if they had succumbed to their charitable im-

pulses? I have always felt that Donald Duck would not enjoy Disney's Silly Symphonies, which are sometimes sentimental to the point of insipidity. This also follows a tradition of the silent films, but it is a lousy tradition. The Silly Symphonies are aimed at children, and Disney has the wrong idea about children, who in my experience are hard-headed individuals who are only impressed with facts. When double-features forced Disney into feature-length pictures, his two styles became more noticeably divergent by being confined within the framework of the same film. On sentimental subjects he used sentimental colors and an artistry of the kind employed on Christmas cards, in strange contrast with the rest of his work. Westbrook Pegler was the only person who enjoyed the bluebirds in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*; everybody else liked the dwarfs, who were unsentimental, hard-working characters when left to themselves.

In *Fantasia* the only sentimental sequences are the Pastoral Symphony, and here Disney is false to what is not at all a sentimental piece of music. His illustrations to the *Nutcracker Suite* of Tchaikowsky have to do with sugar-plum fairies who go around sprinkling dew on cobwebs, but that was all right with me. Still, other parts of *Fantasia* were better. Disney does not take a high-brow view of music, and he even allows Mickey Mouse, in the *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, which is the one selection where the music and the cartoon fit each other perfectly, to kid Leopold Stokowski. The satire on ballet dancing in Ponchielli's *Dance of the Hours* is uproarious, and I don't think any company is going to perform the *Dance of the Hours* from now on without making people think of Disney's ostriches and hippopotami, who are perfectly graceful, you understand, but nonetheless ostriches and hippopotami. The whole program is presented with a lack of affectation, unless there was affectation in the stagy lighting of Stokowski in that first Bach piece. There are no titles. Deems Taylor, who can be as highbrow as the rest of them, has been constrained by Disney to come to the footlights and explain with complete simplicity what the music is about.

This picture opens up new fields for the movies. I don't think anything will come of the idea of illustrating great music with animated cartoons, but what a picture *Fantasia* is for children! Not only will it introduce them (in the Bach *Toccata and Fugue*) to the nature of music by the use of symbols to represent musical themes, making it easy to recognize the themes when they recur, but it will tell them almost all that

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by A. J. STEIGER

in an early issue of NEW MASSES

is known about the evolution of life (in *Rite of Spring*), Greek mythology (in the *Pastoral Symphony*) and Christian symbolism (in *Night on Bald Mountain*). I believe that a print of *Rite of Spring* has already been used to wonderful effect in a geology class in one of the California universities. It was a publicity stunt, but the fact is that no other artistic medium has ever conveyed the feeling that the monstrous dinosaurs of several hundred million years ago were in reality living creatures. I guess that animated cartoons sometime in the future may be used in education. When that happens, Disney will be taken aback.

Disney is a business man as well as a genius, and he has made only twelve prints of *Fantasia*, which are being shown in various parts of the country at a \$2.20 top. This is a new way of meeting the competition of the war in Europe. Mickey Mouse was once as popular in Koritz and Hanoi and Sidi Barani as in New York, and Russian pilots painted Donald Ducks on their airplanes, but right now the condition of the foreign market was expressed by a U-Boat captain last week who torpedoed a ship on the way to England with the first print of *The Great Dictator*. Walt Disney spent a couple of million dollars on *Fantasia*, and his only way of getting it back is by intensely cultivating the home market. I am glad to report that his business manager has not been able to arrange any of the commercial tieups which, in 1938-39, made the faces of Dopey and Pinocchio virtually omnipresent. At an average of \$1.25 a seat Disney will make money. But the scale of prices makes a discussion of *Fantasia*, at this juncture, slightly academic. I'll discuss it again a year from now.

Next week: *Great Beginning*, which returns Soviet pictures to America.

DANIEL TODD.

## Ditto

Lou Cooper adds his comment on "Fantasia's" music.

I DON'T know what your movie critic, Dan Todd, will be saying about Walt Disney's *Fantasia*, but I have a few comments to make about the musical side of the picture. As musical interpreter of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Mickey Mouse lends such humor and freshness to the famous Dukas piece that you feel you are hearing it for the first time. In this sequence music and cartoon satire enjoy their happiest marriage. Every motion on the screen possesses a true relation to the form of the music. It seemed to me that in no other sequence did Walt Disney achieve such successful results.

There were also many exciting moments in the Stravinsky *Rite of Spring*. The breaking of the earth's surface, the belching volcanoes spouting their molten floods of lava, set to the crashing rhythms of Stravinsky, were terrifying and thrilling. Whenever the music and action supplemented one another, the results were highly gratifying. But with a num-

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## GOINGS ON

**AMERICAN IMPERIALISM BIDS FOR POWER.** Discussion by **MILTON HOWARD**, member Daily Worker editorial board, **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2:30 P. M., WORKERS SCHOOL**, 50 East 13th Street, second floor. Admission 25 cents.

**MARXIST ANALYSIS OF NEWS OF THE WEEK. SUNDAY NIGHT, NOVEMBER 24, 8:30 P. M. WORKERS SCHOOL**, 50 East 13 Street, second floor. Admission 25 cents.

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ber like the Beethoven *Pastoral Symphony* you found yourself completely absorbed in watching the characters on the screen while the music faded into the background and you hardly heard it. Not that this composition lends itself any less to narration than the others but only that the story used in this case just did not fit.

One would think that "programmatic" music would lend itself more readily for purposes of this film, but the so-called "absolute" music of Bach's *Toccat and Fugue in D Minor*, was a surprisingly successful rendition. Not that I agree with Deems Taylor, narrator of the film, who described this type of music as having no more meaning than its name, and said that the name only served to define the form of the piece. This "pure" music had its origin in very real material human relations and succeeded in synthesizing the essence of these relations in abstract forms. This great Bach music was combined with rapidly changing color schemes, vague shifting forms, and flashes of figure abstractions in motion. The effect was excellent.

There were many more selections. But the program in general was overlong and the results uneven. Except for some hilarious sections in the *Dance of the Hours*, the second half bogged down and never matched the standard of the Bach, *The Nutcracker Suite*, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, or the Stravinsky which made up the first part. Wherever the images on the screen had a life of their own which in some way was organically related to the musical structure (the mushroom dancing the Chinese Dance from the *Nutcracker Suite*) the effect on the listener was tremendous. But where the drawings were artificially superimposed on the music as was the case in the picture's weak finale (Schubert's *Ave Maria*) the results were entirely unsuccessful. The amplifiers and the sound reproduction, by the way, were faultless.

The *Fantasia* experiment is notable. First it will create an intimate friendship between the great musical classics and millions of people who formerly felt strange in the presence of these works. Secondly, it has and will undoubtedly further revolutionize the many movie techniques especially those involving the use of color and music in films.

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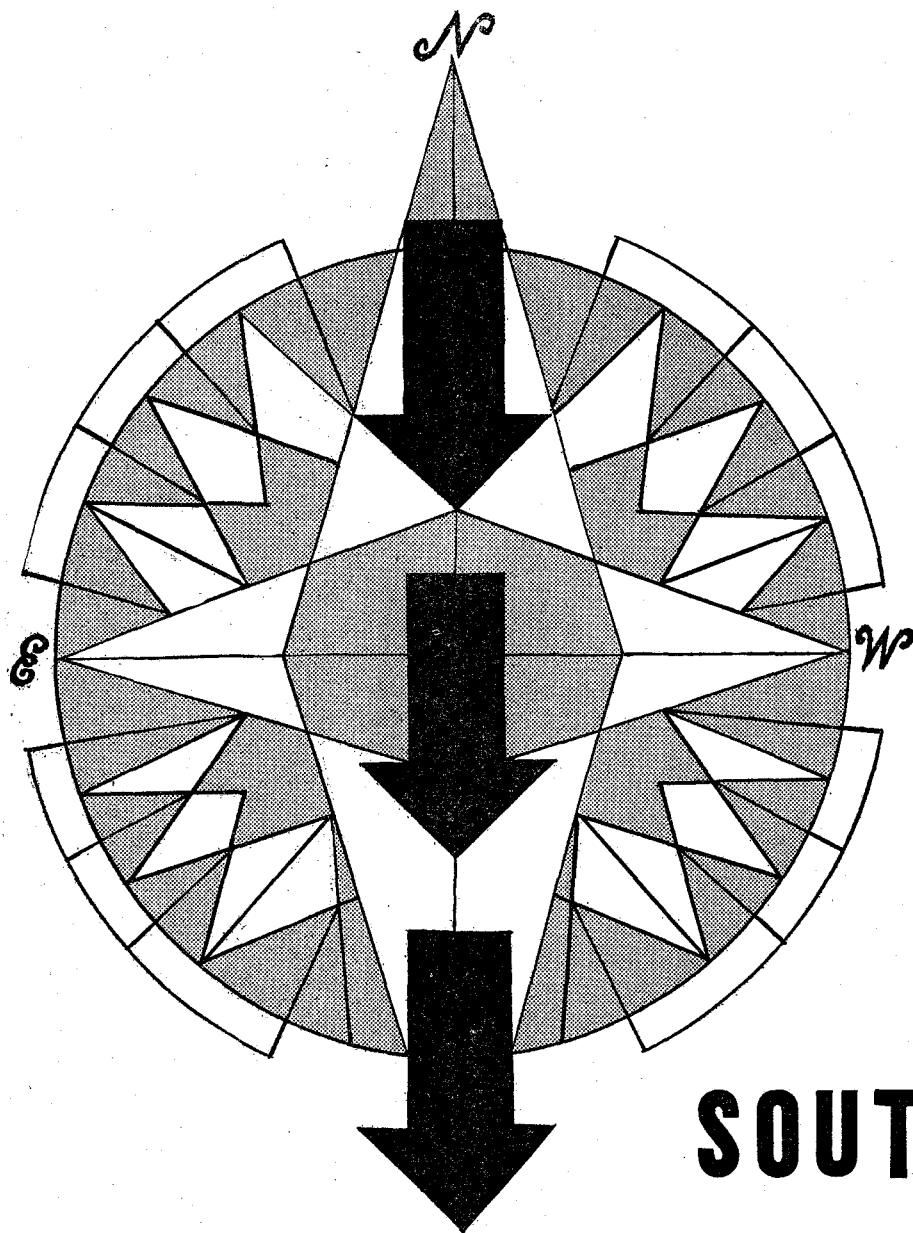
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